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HISTORY OF THE MACDONALDS,

AND

THE LORDS OF THE ISLES.

BY THE EDITOR.

VIII.

It has been maintained by some that Angus Og was a legitimate son of John, Earl of Ross, but all authorities now considered worthy of the name hold a different opinion. It has been already seen that Gregory calls him a bastard. Smibert, in his "Clans of the Highlands of Scotland," referring to the assertions of "ancient private annalists," and especially to Hugh Macdonald, the Sleat family historian, says that some of these assert that John, last Lord of the Isles, who had no children by his wife, Elizabeth Livingston, had yet, quoting from Hugh Macdonald, "a natural son begotten of Macduffie, Colonsay's daughter, and Angus Og, his legitimate son, by the Earl of Angus's daughter." In reference to the latter assertion, Smibert says—"No mention of this Angus marriage occurs in any one public document relating to the Lords of the Isles, or to the Douglasses, then Earls of Angus. On the other hand, the acknowledged wife of John of the Isles, Elizabeth Livingston, was certainly alive in 1475, at which date he, among other charges, is accused of making 'his bastard son' a lieutenant to him in insurrectionary convocations of the lieges; and Angus could therefore come of no second marriage. He indubitably is the same party still more distinctly named in subsequent Parliamentary records as 'Angus of the Isles, *bastard son* to umquhile John of the Isles.' The attribution of noble and legitimate birth to Angus took its origin, without doubt, in the circumstance of John's want of children by marriage having raised his natural son to a high degree of power in the clan, which the active character of Angus well fitted him to use as he willed. That power was still further established by his being named in 1476 as principal heir of entail to his father, when the latter submitted to the Crown and obtained a seat in Parliament; but in that very deed of entail his illegitimacy is stated once more with equal clearness, and he was only to succeed failing other heirs of the body of John. However, in the absence of any such legal issue, Angus wielded all the authority of an heir-apparent, and appears, by his violence, to have involved the tribe in perpetual disturbance." The father and son seem to have become quite reconciled to each other during the latter years of

the life of Angus, who died during his father's lifetime, about 1485, at Inverness, in the manner already described. A few years after this the Lord of the Isles is again in antagonism to the Crown, and enters into a treaty with Edward IV. of England, who was preparing another expedition against the Scots; and for the remainder of the reign of James III. the vassals of the Island Chief appear to have been in a state of open resistance to the Crown. Angus Og having, according to some authorities, died without legitimate issue, and John, Lord of the Isles, being now advanced in years, his nephew, Alexander of Lochalsh, son of Celestine, his Lordship's brother, held, according to Gregory and other authorities, the rank of heir to the Lordship of the Isles, while others maintain that he merely commanded the clan as guardian to Angus Og's youthful son, Donald Dubh, who was still a prisoner at Inchconnell; but the latter view, it is held, is inconsistent with several known facts, one of which is, a charter, dated in 1492, in favour of John Maclean of Lochbui of the office of Bailliary of the south half of the Island of Tiree, granted by John, Lord of the Isles, and *Alexander de Insulis, Lord of Lochalsh*, an office which could not have been given by Alexander of Lochalsh in any other capacity than as his father's heir to the Lordship of the Isles, for it formed no part of his own patrimony of Lochalsh. In 1488 Alexander invaded the mainland at the head of his vassals with the view of wresting the ancient possessions of his house in the Earldom of Ross from those who now held them by charters from the Crown, especially the Mackenzies, apparently with the full consent and approval of his aged uncle of the Isles. A full account of his proceedings and the causes which were the more immediate cause of them is given in "The History of the Mackenzies,"* pp. 59-74, and at pp. 161-170, No. xxix. (vol. iii.) of the *Celtic Magazine*. It is therefore unnecessary to reproduce it here, but we may give the following summary from Gregory:—"As the districts of Lochalsh, Lochcarron, and Lochbroom, which Alexander inherited from his father, and which he now held as a Crown fief, lay in the Earldom of Ross, his influence there was greater than that of Angus of the Isles had been. Yet the only Crown vassal of the Earldom who joined him was Hugh Rose, younger of Kilravock, whose father at this time was keeper, under the Earl of Huntly, of the castle of Ardmanach, in Ross. In the year 1491,† a large body of Western Highlanders, composed of the Clanranald of Garmoran, the Clanranald of Lochaber, and the Clanchameron, under Alexander of Lochalsh, advanced from Lochaber into Badenoch, where they were joined by the Clanchattan. The latter tribe, which possessed lands both under the Lord of the Isles and the Earl of Huntly, was led by Farquhar Mackintosh, the son and heir of the captain of the Clanchattan. From Badenoch the confederates marched to Inverness, where Farquhar Mackintosh stormed and took the royal castle, in which he established a garrison; and where the forces of the Highlanders were probably increased by the arrival of the young Baron of Kilravock and his followers. Proceeding to the north-east, the fertile lands belonging to Sir Alexander Urquhart, the Sheriff of Cromarty, were plundered, and a vast booty carried off by the Islanders and their associates. It is probable that at this time Loch-

* By the same author. Published by A. & W. Mackenzie, Inverness: 1879.

† There is some confusion here as to the dates, for there is no doubt at all that the battle of Park was fought as early as 1488,

alsh had divided his force into two parts, one being sent home with the booty already acquired, whilst with the other he proceeded to Strathconnan, for the purpose of ravaging the lands of the Mackenzies. The latter clan, under their chief, Kenneth, having assembled their forces, surprised and routed the invaders, who had encamped near the river Connan, at a place called Park, whence the conflict has received the name of Blairnpark. Alexander of Lóchalsh was wounded, and, as some say, taken prisoner in this battle, and his followers were expelled from Ross. The victors then proceeded to ravage the lands of Ardmnanach, and those belonging to William Munro of Fowlis—the former because the young Baron of Kilravock, whose father was governor of that district, had assisted the other party; the latter probably because Munro, who joined neither party, was suspected of secretly favouring Lochalsh. So many excesses were committed at this time by the Mackenzies, that the Earl of Huntly, Lieutenant of the North, was compelled (notwithstanding their services in repelling the invasion of the Macdonalds) to act against them as rebels and oppressors of the lieges. Meanwhile, the origin of these commotions did not escape the investigation of the Government; and the result was the final forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles, and its annexation to the Crown. It does not appear, from the documents which we possess, how far the Lord of the Isles was himself implicated in the rebellious proceedings of his nephew. It may be that his inability to keep the wild tribes of the West Highlands and Isles in proper subjection was his chief crime, and that the object of the Government in proceeding to his forfeiture was, by breaking up the confederacy of the Islanders, to strengthen indirectly the royal authority in these remote districts. The tenor of all the proceedings of James IV., connected with the final forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles, leads to this conclusion. These proceedings will be described at more length in their proper place. At present we have only to record the fact, that, in the Parliament which sat in the month of May 1493, John, fourth and last Lord of the Isles, was forfeited and deprived of his title and estates. In the month of January following, he appeared in presence of the King, and went through the form of making a voluntary surrender of his Lordship, after which he appears to have remained for some time in the King's household in the receipt of a pension. Finally, this aged nobleman retired to the Monastery of Paisley, a foundation which owed much to the pious liberality of himself and his ancestors. Here he died, about the year 1498; and was interred, at his own request, in the tomb of his royal ancestor, King Robert II.*

During this period—from the final forfeiture of the Lords of the Isles in 1493, to his death—the country was almost in a constant state of insurrection, though many of the leading heads of families made their submission to the Crown; for Alexander of Lochalsh lost no opportunity of asserting his claim to the Earldom of Ross and the Lordship of the Isles. It was, however, determined by the Government that no single family should ever again be permitted to acquire the same preponderance in the west as the Lords of the Isles. At first the steps taken to secure the submission of the Islanders were not characterised by any great severity, and in the year 1493 James IV. proceeded in person to receive the sub-

* Highlands and Isles, pp. 55-58.

mission and homage of the leading vassals of the ancient Lordship. In this he acted wisely, for even those haughty barons had some respect for Royalty, and proved themselves willing to grant to their king in person what it was quite possible he could never have forced from them by the sword. Among the first who came to submit themselves to his clemency were Alexander de Insulis of Lochalsh, John de Insulis of Isla, John Maclean of Lochbuy, and Duncan Mackintosh of that ilk, formerly vassals of the forfeited Lord of the Isles. They received in return for their submission royal charters of all or nearly all the lands which they previously held under the Island Chief, and were thus made freeholders, quite independent of any superior but the Crown; and Alexander of Lochalsh and John of Isla both received the honour of knighthood, while the former, as presumptive heir to the Lordship of the Isles, previous to the forfeiture of his uncle, received a promise from the King to secure all the free tenants of the Isles in their then present holdings, an engagement which at first seems to have been strictly adhered to. This promise is distinctly mentioned in several charters of the year 1498.* In all the circumstances it must be conceded that the King acted with great leniency towards the Island Chiefs, and especially to Alexander of Lochalsh, who had been the leading spirit in all the recent troubles, particularly in the outbreak which ended in the forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles. The King soon after returned to his lowland court; but some of the more powerful vassals still holding out, it was decided that another expedition should be sent accompanied by such a display of military force as should effectually secure their submission and command their obedience. So, in the month of April 1494, we find the King in the Isles making preparations for a third visit by preparing and garrisoning the castle of Tarbet, one of the most important strongholds in the West Highlands. In July following he is again there with a powerful force, when he proceeded to seize the castle of Dunaverty, in South Kintyre, where he placed a strong garrison, supplied, like the one at Tarbet, with powerful artillery and experienced gunners. By far the best and most complete account of this period by any writer is that given by Gregory, and whether acknowledged or not, it has been made the groundwork by all our modern historians when treating of this dark period in the History of the Highlands and Isles. We shall therefore quote him *in extenso*. He says—It will be recollected that the districts of Kintyre and Knapdale were, in 1476, expressly resigned by the Lord of the Isles, along with the Earldom of Ross, to the Crown. A great portion of Kintyre had been held, under the Lord of the Isles, by Sir Donald de Insulis, surnamed Balloch of Isla, prior to this resignation, which deprived Sir Donald and his family of a very valuable possession. Whether Sir John of Isla, the grandson and representative of Sir Donald, had, at the time he received knighthood, on the first visit of James IV. to the Isles, any hopes of the restoration of Kintyre, cannot now be ascertained. But it is certain that he was deeply offended at the step now taken, of placing a garrison in the castle of Dunaverty; and he secretly collected his followers, determined to take the first opportunity of expelling the royal garrison, and taking possession of the district of Kintyre. This opportunity was soon afforded

* Reg. of Great Seal, xiii., 336, 337. Gregory, p. 88.

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him. The King, not expecting opposition from this quarter, was preparing to quit Kintyre by sea, with his own personal attendants—the bulk of his followers having previously been sent away on some other expedition—when the Chief of Isla, finding everything favourable for his attempt, stormed the castle, and hung the governor from the wall, in the sight of the King and his fleet.*

James, unable at the time to punish this daring rebel, took, nevertheless, such prompt measures for the vindication of his insulted authority, that ere long Sir John of Isla and four of his sons were apprehended in Isla, by Macian of Ardnamurchan, and brought to Edinburgh. There they were found guilty of high treason, and executed accordingly on the Burrowmuir; their bodies being interred in the church of St Anthony. Two surviving sons, who afterwards restored the fortunes of this family, fled to their Irish territory of the Glens, to escape the pursuit of Macian.† In the course of this year, likewise, two powerful chiefs, Roderick Macleod of the Lewis, and John Macian of Ardnamurchan, made their submission, and the activity displayed by the latter against the rebellious Islesmen, soon procured him a large share of the Royal favour.

In the following year, 1495, after extensive preparation for another expedition to the Isles, the King assembled an army at Glasgow; and, on the 18th of May, we find him at the Castle of Mingarry, in Ardnamurchan, being the second time within two years that he had held his court in this remote castle. John Huchonson, or Hughson, of Sleat; Donald Angusson of Keppoch; Allan MacRuari of Moydert, chief of the Clanranald; Hector Maclean of Dowart; Ewin Allanson of Lochiel, captain of the Clan Chameron, and Gilleonan Macneill of Barra, seem to have made their submission in consequence of this expedition. In this year, too, Kenneth Oig Mackenzie of Kintail and Farquhar Macintosh, son and heir of the captain of the Clanchattan, were imprisoned by the King in the Castle of Edinburgh. This may have been partly owing to their lawless conduct in 1491, but was more probably caused by a dread of their influence among the Islanders—for the mothers of these powerful chiefs were each the daughters of an Earl of Ross, Lord of the Isles. The measures now taken by the King were soon after followed up by an important Act of the Lords of Council (1496), which merits particular notice. This Act provided, in reference to civil actions against the Islanders—of which a considerable number were then in preparation—that the chief of every clan should be answerable for the due execution of summonses and other writs against those of his own tribe, under the penalty of being made liable himself to the party bringing the action. This, although undoubtedly a strong measure, was in all probability rendered necessary by the disturbed state of the Isles after so many rebellions, and could hardly fail to produce a beneficial effect; for in these wild and remote districts the officers of the law could not perform their

* The Treasurer's accounts, under August 1494, show that Sir John of the Isles was summoned, at that time, to answer for treason "in Kintyre." The precise act of treason is learned from a tradition well known in the Western Highlands.

† These particulars regarding the punishment inflicted on the Chief of Isla and his sons are derived from the MS. of Macvurich and Hugh Macdonald, corroborated from a charter from the King to Macian, dated 24th March 1499, and preserved among the Argyll papers, rewarding the latter for his services in apprehending Sir John, his sons, and accomplices.

necessary duties in safety, without the assistance of a large military force. At the same time that this important regulation was made, five chiefs of rank—viz., Hector Maclean of Dowart, John Macian of Ardnamurchan, Allan MacRuari of Moydert, Ewin Allanson of Lochiel, and Donald Angusson of Keppoch—appearing before the Lords of Council bound themselves, “by the extension of their hands,” to the Earl of Argyle, on behalf of the King, to abstain from mutual injuries and molestation, each under a penalty of five hundred pounds. Such were the steps taken by the King and Council to introduce, at this time, law and order into the remote Highlands and Isles.

The active share taken by King James in supporting the pretensions of Perkin Warbeck (1497) withdrew his attention for a time from the state of the Western Isles, and seems to have given opportunity for a new insurrection, which, however, was suppressed without the necessity for another Royal expedition. Sir Alexander of Lochalsh—whether with the intention of claiming the Earldom of Ross, or of revenging himself on the Mackenzies, for his former defeat at Blairnephew, is uncertain—invaded the more fertile districts of Ross in a hostile manner. He was encountered by the Mackenzies and Munros at a place called Drumchatt, where, after a sharp skirmish, he and his followers were again routed and driven out of Ross. After this event the Knight of Lochalsh proceeded southward among the Isles, endeavouring to rouse the Islanders to arms in his behalf, but without success, owing probably to the terror produced by the execution of Sir John (Cathanach) of Isla and his sons. Meantime Macian of Ardnamurchan, judging this a proper opportunity of doing an acceptable service to the King, surprised Lochalsh in the Island of Oronsay, whither he had retreated, and put him to death. In this Macian was assisted, according to tradition, by Alexander, the eldest surviving son of John (Cathanach) of Isla, with whom he had contrived to effect a reconciliation, and to whom he had given his daughter in marriage. Sir Alexander of Lochalsh left both sons and daughters, who afterwards fell into the King's hands; and of whom we shall have occasion to speak in the sequel. About the same time as the unsuccessful insurrection of which we have just spoken, the Chiefs of Mackenzie and Mackintosh made their escape from Edinburgh Castle; but on their way to the Highlands they were treacherously surprised at the Torwood by the Laird of Buchanan. Mackenzie having offered resistance, was slain, and his head, along with Mackintosh, who was taken alive, was presented to the King by Buchanan. The latter was rewarded, and Mackintosh returned to the dungeon, where he remained till after the battle of Flodden.

In the summer of 1498 King James, still intent upon preserving and extending his influence in the Isles, held his court at a new castle he had caused to be erected in South Kintyre, at the head of Loch Kilkerran, now called the Bay of Campbelltown. Alexander Macleod of Harris, or Dunvegan, and Torquil Macleod, now (by the death of his father Roderick) Lord of the Lewis, paid their homage to the King on this occasion; and some steps were taken to suppress the feud between the Clanhuistean of Sleat and the Clanranald of Moydert, regarding the lands of Garmoran and Uist. The King soon afterwards returned to the Lowlands, leaving, as he imagined, the Isles and West Highlands in a state of tranquillity not likely soon to be disturbed. A few months, however, sufficed

to produce a wonderful change between the King and his subjects in the Isles. The cause of this change remains involved in obscurity; but it must have been powerful to induce so sudden and total a departure from the lenient measures hitherto pursued, and to cause the King to violate his solemn promise by revoking all the charters granted by him to the vassals of the Isles during the last five years.* The new line of policy was no sooner determined on than followed up with the wonted vigour of the Sovereign. We find him at Tarbet in the month of April, when he gave to Archibald, Earl of Argyll, and others for letting on lease, for the term of three years, the entire Lordship of the Isles as possessed by the last lord, both in the Isles and on the mainland, excepting only the Island of Isla and the lands of North and South Kintyre. Argyll received also a commission of Lieutenandry, with the fullest powers, over the Lordship of the Isles; and, some months later, was appointed Keeper of the Castle of Tarbet, and Bailie and Governor of the King's lands in Knapdale. Argyll was not, however, the only individual who benefited by this change of measures. Alexander, Lord of Gordon, eldest son of the Earl of Huntly, received a grant of numerous lands in Lochaber (1500) formerly belonging to the Lordship of the Isles. Upon Duncan Stewart of Appin, who was much employed in the Royal service, were bestowed the lands of Duror and Glenco during the King's pleasure. The important services of Macian of Ardnamurchan (who alone of all the Islanders seems to have retained the favour of his Sovereign) were likewise suitably acknowledged.†

Skene, though somewhat less clear in his details, substantially corroborates this account,‡ and Tytler sums up the whole of the various expeditions of the King so neatly that we cannot resist quoting him. He says:—In 1493, although much occupied with other cares and concerns, he found time to penetrate twice into the Highlands, proceeding as far as Dunstaffnage and Mingarry in Ardnamurchan, and in the succeeding year, such was the indefatigable activity with which he executed his public duties, that he thrice visited the Isles. The first of these voyages, which took place in April and May, was conducted with great state. It afforded the youthful monarch an opportunity of combining business and amusement, of gratifying his passion for sailing and hunting, of investigating the state of the fisheries, of fitting out his barges for defence as well as pleasure, and of inducing his nobles to build and furnish, at their own expense, vessels in which they might accompany their Sovereign. It had the effect also of impressing upon the inhabitants of the Isles a salutary idea of the wealth, grandeur, and military power of the King. The rapidity with which he travelled from place to place, the success and expedition with which he punished all who dared to oppose him, his generosity to his friends and attendants, and his gay and condescending familiarity with the lower classes of his subjects, all combined to increase his popularity and to consolidate and unite, by the bonds of equal laws and affectionate allegiance, the remotest parts of the kingdom.

* The King's general parliamentary revocation of all charters granted in his minority, could not affect those of the Islanders, which seem all to have been granted after his attaining majority.

† Highlands and Isles, 89-95.

‡ Highlanders of Scotland, vol. ii., pp. 86-90; Tytler's History of Scotland, vol. ii., pp. 258-259, 1879 Ed.

At Tarbet, in Cantire, he repaired the fort originally built by Bruce, and established an emporium for his shipping, transporting thither his artillery, laying in a stock of gunpowder, and carrying along with him his master-gunners, in whose training and practice he appears, from the payments in the treasurer's books, to have busied himself with much perseverance and enthusiasm. These warlike measures were generally attended with the best effects; most of the chieftains readily submitted to a Prince who could carry hostilities within a few days into the heart of their country, and attack them in their island fastnesses with a force which they found it vain to resist; one only, Sir John of the Isles had the folly to defy the royal vengeance, ungrateful for that repeated lenity with which his treasons had been already pardoned. His great power in the Isles probably induced him to believe that the King would not venture to drive him to extremities; but in this he was disappointed. James instantly summoned him to stand his trial for treason; and in a Parliament which assembled at Edinburgh soon after the King's return from the north, this formidable rebel was stripped of his power, and his lands and possessions forfeited to the crown.*

The last Lord of the Isles died, as we have seen, in the Monastery of Paisley, about the year 1498, leaving no legitimate issue. He was married to Elizabeth, eldest daughter of James, Lord Livingston, great Chamberlain of Scotland. His son, Angus Og, died, as already stated, about 1485, leaving an only child, Donald Dubh, who was at the time of his father's death, and still (1498) continued to be, a prisoner in the Castle of Inchconnell. Angus was married to Lady Mary Campbell, daughter of Colin, first Earl of Argyll; and most authorities agree that Donald Dubh was the legitimate issue of this marriage, though, for state reasons, he was declared a bastard in various Acts of parliament, and known, in consequence, as "Donald the Bastard." John the second illegitimate son of the last lord, also died during his father's lifetime—before the 16th of December 1478, as is clearly proved by the Register of the Great Seal, viii., 120. Angus Og of the Isles had also two daughters—one of whom, Florence, married Duncan Mackintosh of Mackintosh, and the other, Margaret, who married Kenneth Mackenzie (a'Bhlair), VIIth Baron of Kintail. The sons of both—the heirs respectively of Mackintosh and Kintail, were taken prisoners to Edinburgh Castle, in 1495, as already described. Celestine of Lochalsh died in 1473—fifteen years before the death of his brother, Earl John—while his son, Alexander of Lochalsh, the "heir presumptive" to the Lordship of the Isles, was assassinated in the Island of Oronsay in 1498—the same year in which Earl John himself died. In the same year also died Hugh of Sleat, the only surviving son of Earl John, leaving by his first wife, Finvola, daughter of Alexander, the son of John of Ardnamurchan, one son—John MacHuistean, or Hughson, who is above referred to as having, in 1495, made his submission to James IV. with several others of the principal vassals of the Isles. John Hughson died without issue in 1502, but he was succeeded in the property by his brother, Donald Gallach, previously referred as the issue of his father by

* Treasurer's Accounts, August 24th, 1494, "Item, to summon Sir John of the Isles, of treason in Kintyre, and for the expense of witnesses, vi. lb. xiii. sh. iii. d." This, according to Mr Gregory, was Sir John, called "Cathanach," of Isla and Cantire, and Lord of the Glens in Ireland—executed afterwards at Edinburgh about the year 1500.

Mary, daughter of Gunn, Crouner of Caithness, and from whom is descended the family of the present Lord Macdonald of the Isles, who still possesses the Sleat property in Skye, and of whom, and other members of the family, hereafter.

Sir Alexander of Lochalsh, nephew of the last Lord of the Isles, married a daughter of Lovat, by whom he left three sons and two daughters, the eldest of whom, Sir Donald of Lochalsh, known as "Donald Gallda," Lieutenant of the Isles, was afterwards elected by the Islanders to the Lordship of the Isles. He and his brothers took a prominent part in the succeeding insurrections in the Isles, in connection with which his proceedings will be noticed at length in the sequel. It may, however, be stated here that he and his brothers died without issue, his two sisters, Margaret and Janet, having succeeded to his property, carrying it to their respective husbands—Macdonald of Glengarry and Dingwall of Kildun.

From these facts it will be seen that the vassals of the Lordship of the Isles, on the death of Earl John, were without any recognised head, while there were not less than three possible claimants to that high position; namely, Donald Dubh, the son of Angus Og of the Isles, the latter of whom was undoubtedly heir of entail to John, last Lord of the Isles and Earl of Ross. Donald Dubh therefore, whether legitimate or not, had powerful claims, and he was not long in asserting them. The next claimant was Sir Donald, whose father, Sir Alexander of Lochalsh, had been for many years acting as, and holding the rank of, heir to the Lordship; and finally we have the descendants of Hugh of Sleat, who also, in their turn, claimed the succession. To follow these in their various insurrections and make the various points in this most difficult portion of the history of the Macdonalds as clear as possible, will be attempted in our next.

(To be Continued.)

Genealogical Notes and Queries.

ANSWER TO QUERY.

THE MACBEANS OF KINCHYLE.

In answer to the query by "A. M. S." in our last issue, regarding this family, Mr Charles Fraser-Mackintosh, F.S.A.S., M.P., writes to us as follows:—"Upon the 16th October 1759 Lieutenant Donald Macbean was served heir male to his late uncle, Æneas Macbean, in the lands of Kinchyle; and on the 26th March 1760 the conveyance to Fraser of Ness Castle was signed by Donald Macbean's commissioners, he being then abroad."

SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF SCOTLAND.—At the last monthly meeting of this Society, Mr Alexander Mackenzie of the *Celtic Magazine* was among those elected F.S.A.S.

A LEGEND OF ST KILDA.

[CONTINUED.]

SLOWLY and with effort did the miserable lady recover from her death-like swoon. But she was young, and youth and a strong constitution carried her through the severe trial. When she was able to look about, her heart sank as she saw the barren rocks, rising dark, gloomy, and seemingly inaccessible on every hand. Not a living creature could she see, except myriads of birds and wild fowls of the air flying high up among the rocks. The noise they made was extraordinary—the harsh cry of the gull alternated with the quack, quack of numberless ducks, the hissing sound made by the immense quantities of solan geese and swans, and the various notes of pigeons, kittiewakes, puffins, anks, guillemots, and smaller birds—the sea was covered with them, the ground was white with their feathers, while the sky was darkened by the swarms of winged creatures. She had been left on the Island of St Kilda—

Whose lonely race
Resign the setting sun to Indian worlds,

80 miles from the nearest land, far out on the wide bosom of the stormy Atlantic.

Turning her despairing looks on every side, Lady Grange's attention was directed to a particular rock by observing something unusual moving down the face of it. She could not at first make out what it was; but, after a while, she saw that it was a boy hanging on a rope, descending the almost perpendicular cliff. She guessed he was searching for eggs from the commotion his presence caused among the feathered tribe, as fluttering their wings and uttering their shrill cries they flew hither and thither, now swooping down and hovering over their ravaged nests, anon rising and circling far overhead.

The sight of the boy raised the desponding heart of Lady Grange. It cheered her by showing she was not, as she had supposed, on an uninhabited shore. Whoever or whatever the people might be, they could not be more cruel than those who had condemned her to such a fate. But how could she attract his attention? She called out in her shrillest tones, but her voice was lost in the screaming of wild fowls. She waved her handkerchief wildly. Alas! he saw not the tiny signal. Almost despairing, she tore off the silken scarf that covered her shoulders, and clambering on to a rock, stood holding it aloft, till her arms ached. The ruse was successful; the rays of the sun glanced on the coloured silk as it floated on the breeze, and its glittering sheen caught the quick eye of the fowler; but his astonishment was so great at the apparition of a lady alone on the rocks, that he nearly lost the nerve so essential to his dangerous avocation. He, however, managed to signal to his companions to haul him up, when he related with bated breath the vision he had seen. They at first laughed at him and his story; but, on his persisting upon the reality of what he had seen, and declaring his intention of going down to the shore to get a nearer view of the figure, his companions did their best to dissuade him from his purpose, saying, it must have been a fairy or perhaps

a mermaid he had seen, and who knew what dire penalties he might have to pay if he had the temerity to venture within her reach. Curiosity, however, proved stronger than fear of the supernatural, and the bold lad left his comrades and made his way by circuitous paths to the place where he had seen the lady. As he again caught sight of her, he stopped involuntarily, absorbed in admiration, for truly never before had the half-civilised youth seen anything human so beautiful as the graceful loveliness of the unhappy Lady Grange, as she stood helplessly on the bleak seashore. Her fair face, troubled and tear-stained, her long tresses blowing about in the cold breeze, and her rich dress wet and soiled by the salt water; her evident distress touched a tender chord in the chivalrous nature of the lad, and he advanced without a particle of fear. On perceiving him, the miserable lady held out her delicate hands, and implored his help to guide her to some place of refuge. The dulcet tones of her voice fell on his ears like a rippling strain of sweet music; but, alas! he could not understand a word, he guessed her meaning, however, and while speaking to her in Gaelic, he took her hand and pointed towards his home. His frank sunburnt face, lighted up with a pair of bright truthful-looking eyes, won her confidence at once, and she surrendered herself to his guidance without a scruple. It would be impossible to adequately describe the intense astonishment and curiosity caused by the appearance of Lady Grange and her young guide, among the primitive inhabitants of the Island, whose rough appearance, uncouth language, and wild gestures, alarmed the delicately-nurtured lady; and she clung closer to her young protector, who, rebuking their ill manners, led the way to his own cottage, in which he lived with his widowed mother. The old woman was as much surprised at the appearance of her son's companion as her neighbours, but she possessed far more common sense. Seeing the exhausted condition of the poor lady, she hastened to provide nourishment and dry clothes; and not until her strange visitor was cared for and was lying down taking the repose which she was so sorely needing, did the kindly old dame indulge her very natural curiosity, by questioning her son, and eliciting all he knew about the mysterious arrival of their guest. Such an unheard-of circumstance had never happened before in the memory of the "oldest inhabitant" of the lonely island. Many and strange were the conjectures and theories broached by the simple people as they gathered together to discuss the startling event. Some suggested that there had been a ship wrecked on the rocks, and that the lady was the only survivor; but the others soon reminded them that there had been no storm for many days, and, moreover, there was not a sign to be seen of any wreckage, so that idea was exploded. The majority inclined to the belief that there was something uncanny about the circumstance altogether; but they differed as to the class of supernatural beings to which the lady belonged, and the object of her visiting St Kilda; but they all agreed that whether fairy, witch, water-sprite, or mermaid, her appearance boded no good, and they earnestly counselled the widow, Elspeth, to have nothing more to do with such an unearthly creature. "No, no, neighbours," replied the old woman firmly, "she is neither witch nor fairy. I gave her food, and she ate both bread and salt; that shows she is human, for no fairy nor sprite can touch salt. Besides, I knew a stranger was to land on our shore to-day, for just at daybreak my nose burst out bleeding—a

sure sign of a stranger coming. I will give her a share of my cottage as long as she likes to stay, and will allow none of you to annoy or injure her."

These sentiments were echoed by her son, who warmly espoused the cause of the fair unknown, whom he looked upon as his especial charge, and with youthful ardour proclaimed himself her champion.

The neighbours were not convinced, but concluded to let the matter rest for the present, contenting themselves with prognosticating all kinds of evil consequences to the self-willed mother and son.

Days, weeks, months, dragged their weary length over the head of the unfortunate Lady Grange. She still remained an inmate of old Elspeth's cottage, treated with great kindness and respect; but what an existence for the high-born beauty—a miserable hovel instead of a stately castle, food of the coarsest description, roughly cooked, in lieu of the dainties to which she had ever been accustomed; for company, in place of courtiers, nobles, and ladies, with troops of obsequious attendants, she was surrounded by half savage islanders, whose language she did not understand, and whose uncouth but well meant attentions almost filled her with disgust. No wonder the poor lady pined away, wasting her strength in unavailing regrets for the past. She saw now, when alas it was too late, the folly of her life. She remembered with bitter anguish how her kind grandmother had warned her against her ill-fated marriage; how self-willed she had been in opposing her husband's wishes; how infatuated she had been to make such an implacable enemy of Nigel, whom she might have secured for a friend; then would come the worst thought of all, that she had been the cause of the sad fate of her cousin, the brave, the gallant young Allan, the whole scene of his murder would rise before her mental vision—again she saw her stern husband with his gleaming sword; again she saw the fiendish look of malice on the cruel face of the hated Nigel as he plunged his dagger in the true heart of her kinsman; then would she see the loved face of her cousin turn grey with the ghastly hue of death, until, overwhelmed with the agony of the terrible remembrance, she would cry aloud and fall into a fit of hysterical weeping. The only thing that relieved the tedium of her existence was the companionship of the widow's son Alastair. In spite of her misery, Lady Grange could not help being touched by the devotion of the brave, kind-hearted youth. From the hour in which he found her on the rocks, he seemed to have but one motive in life—to wait upon and serve the forlorn lady. Never in the days of her highest prosperity had she a more ardent admirer, a stauncher friend, or a more willing page than she had now in the bare-footed and bare-headed Alastair. On warm sunny days, when he could coax her to take a walk, he would guide her to the fairest spots, assisting her over the broken ground, and removing every obstacle in her path, with the chivalrous care and delicate attention of a high-born cavalier. He would wade neck-deep in the seething waves to secure for her the prettiest seaweed and shells; he would climb the highest rocks to pluck rare flowers, or descend the cliffs, hanging to a rope made of strips of raw cow-hide, strongly twisted together, and covered with sheep skin to protect it from friction with the rocks, to procure the choicest eggs and the most beautiful feathers. Lady Grange took pains to teach her young companion some English, so that she could hold a little intercourse with him, and

could relate her sad history. There was much in it that the young unsophisticated islander could not understand, but he gathered that she had been grievously wronged, and he burned with indignation at the thought, and longed to be able to avenge her.

As time wore on, the fair exile lost the faint hope she at first had of the chance, poor as it was, of her husband relenting and returning for her, or of the possibility of her friends discovering her condition. Still she could not bear the idea of dying, with her tragic fate unknown and unavenged. She felt her end was near. The cruel usage she had been subjected to, aggravated by the intense anguish of mind she endured, had undermined her constitution, and consumption—that fell destroyer of the young and beautiful—had marked her for its victim. Alastair had solemnly promised that if he ever got a chance of leaving the island, he would do his utmost to reach her friends, and acquaint them with her story; but she felt what a poor chance there was of his ever being in a condition to fulfil his promise. She had no writing materials, or she would have written a narrative of her wrongs; but she thought of a project, which she hastened to put into execution. Like all the ladies of her time, she was well skilled in fancy needlework, and she conceived the idea of embroidering her history on her muslin apron. She found a needle stuck in her dress, but what could she do for thread or silk? For a while she was disheartened, when an idea struck her. Why, had she not her long tresses? Yes! she would use them for her proposed work. So she commenced her task; hair by hair she pulled out of her poor weary head; stitch by stitch, letter by letter, word by word, she patiently worked on. Too weak now to go out, she spent all her time on her self-imposed task, while daily, hourly, the hacking cough grew worse, the hectic flush burned brighter on the wasted cheek, and the thin white hands tired sooner. Still she persevered, until at last the work was completed—the apron was filled from end to end with the record of her sorrows. Surely never was sadder tale told in stranger form. Alastair was in despair at the rapid change for the worse in the unfortunate lady. He used to watch her sew, sew, sewing away, until he felt a lump rising in his throat that seemed to choke him, and scalding tears would blind his eyes, then would he rush away to hide his emotion, and while invoking curses on the authors of her misery, would renew his vows of retribution.

The end came at last. The beautiful and unfortunate Lady Grange lay dying, tended by good old Elspeth, whilst Alastair knelt by the bedside, striving to stifle his sobs as the poor lady gave him her last injunctions, and instructed him how to find out her friends, if ever he should have the chance. The sorrowing lad received the apron with all the reverence of a knight receiving a holy relic, and with a voice tremulous with heart-felt grief swore to make it the object of his life to carry out her wishes, and never to part with the apron until he found some kinsman of the injured lady to avenge her untimely fate. "Thanks, thanks, dear Alastair," murmured the dying Alice, "I know you will do your best; give me your hand—'tis growing very dark—kiss me, Alastair, you have been a good friend to me, good-bye." The faint voice grew fainter, then ceased; and so, supported by Elspeth, and holding Alastair's hand, the weary spirit winged its flight.

The simple-minded islanders, who had long ago ceased to suspect her

as a supernatural being, paid every attention to the remains of their visitor, laid her to rest in a lovely secluded spot, and raised a cairn to mark the place.

Years rolled on. Old Elspeth was dead, and Alastair, now a grave, thoughtful man, still wore his sacred relic next his heart, chafing and fretting at his inability to perform his vow. At last the long-wished-for opportunity arrived. A ship, driven by stress of weather out of her course, dropped anchor at St Kilda. Without a moment's hesitation, Alastair swam out and clambered on board, and offered his services for a passage to the mainland. To this the captain agreed, but being short of hands for his long voyage across the seas, and seeing Alastair was a strong young man, instead of putting him ashore on the mainland, as promised, he bore on his way to a far-distant land. This was a great disappointment to poor Alastair, but he consoled himself by thinking that he could soon get a berth in another ship, to bring him back. He had only to wait yet a little longer. Alas! however, it was not to be; the ship was attacked and taken by pirates, and Alastair, with many others, was carried away and sold into slavery.

Long, long years of misery and captivity dragged their weary length along. Alastair, no longer young and strong, but haggard and gaunt with want, and weakened with over-work, was sometimes ready to give up all hope. Then would the picture of the fair form he had loved so devotedly rise before him; he would feel again the pressure of her hand, and hear the pleading tones of her voice; the memory of that kiss, the first and last, would revive his drooping spirits, and pressing his precious charge closer to his heart, he would take fresh hope, and battle with renewed energy against his adverse destiny.

At last he managed to procure his escape, and after many perils and great hardships, reached a seaport, and secured a berth in a homeward bound ship. In due course he lands at a southern port, many, many miles from his native land. He does not, however, despair; he has regained his freedom, and if life is spared he will make his way north.

A stormy winter's day was drawing to a close; the rain poured in torrents, while the wind howled and shrieked around the turrets and towers of a massive building. The warden was in the act of closing the great outer gate, when he was accosted by a poor man, ragged, travel-worn, and bowed down with age or weakness, who begged, in a faint voice, to be allowed speech with the master of the castle. The man looked at the speaker in undisguised astonishment. "And what should an old scarecrow like you have to say to my master? I' faith he is better employed with his company to-night than to talk with an old beggar; but come in man, you will get food and shelter, but as to speaking with Sir John Graham is quite another matter."

Alastair, for it was he, gladly embraced the proffered hospitality, and meekly followed the warden into the great hall, where, around the blazing wood-fire he mingled with many another poor wanderer. It was not long before he managed to get an audience of Sir John, to whom he related his wonderful story, and to corroborate which he produced the muslin apron, which he had preserved with so much care through every danger. Sir John examined the relic with deep emotion, and read the true

solution of the mystery which for so many years had hung over the fate of his younger brother, Allan, and his lovely cousin Alice. Nor did he neglect to acknowledge the deep debt of gratitude he and his family owed to Alastair for his life-long devotion. He treated him like a brother, and, as soon as he was strong enough to travel, Sir John took him before the King, and demanded justice against the murderers. The King readily granted his request. Sir Hugh Grange had, meanwhile, however, gone to answer for his crimes before a higher tribunal; but Nigel, being still alive, was quickly seized, tried, and executed, and all his possessions confiscated. This act of justice done, Sir John determined to visit the last resting-place of his unfortunate relative, to have the ground consecrated by the Church, and a monument erected. Alastair, whose health was rapidly getting worse, accompanied him and his party. They reached St Kilda in safety, and, amid the wondering looks of the inhabitants, the Bishop and attendant priests consecrated the burial-place with all the pomp and ceremony of the Church, while the workmen raised a costly monument by the side of the rude cairn of uncut stones raised many years before by the kindly people of the island, and which Sir John Graham would not allow to be disturbed. When at last all was finished, the last touches given, and the workmen and on-lookers departed, all, except one—a tall, thin man, in the last stage of weakness, who waited until all had left the hallowed spot. With a deep-drawn sigh he threw himself on the ground and embraced the cold marble. Long, long, he remained there; the sun set in a sky made glorious with his many-coloured rays, the stars peeped out one by one, and the fair moon rose bright and clear—her cold light shone on the glittering white tomb and on the prostrate figure at its base, and thus the night wore on. Early next morning, before embarking, Sir John and his companions went to take a farewell look at his cousin's monument, and there they found the lifeless body of Alastair, his poor stiff arms still encircling the cold marble.

With reverent care they laid him in the ground whereon he died, and carved his name beneath that of the fair being whom he had loved so true, and served so well, and under his name they placed the appropriate words—"Faithful unto death."

M. A. ROSE.

THE LEWISMAN'S GRACE.—During a recent trip through the Outer Hebrides, we met the Rev. John Macrae, Bailleloch, North Uist, who repeated to us the Lewisman's Grace. It is worth preserving. The word "Iudail," which appears to have been the petitioner's Gaelic equivalent for the name of his Maker, was previously unknown to us. Lord Mackenzie of Kintail, who then possessed the principality of the Lewis, seems to have been absent from the island for a longer period than usual, and his return is anxiously prayed for. The word "seap" is well known in the South-west Highlands as meaning a heavy meal. The grace is as follows:—

Iudail! Cuir MacCoinnich an tìr, 's lan phris air a mhàrt; bliochd is dair air a nì, 's meadh blathach anns gach àit' an tachair sinn. A Thi a chuir an t-seap so oirnn cuir seap eil' oirnn, 'so sheap gu seap gus an cuir thu 'n seap dheireannach oirnn; 's biodh e mar sin gu deireadh an t-saoghail, 's gu sìorruidh, suthain. Amen.

THE EDITOR IN CANADA.

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VII.

HAVING on my return from Woodville spent a few days more in Toronto, and having seen old and made new friends there, I started by the Grand Trunk Railway to

GUELPH,

the Capital of the county of Wellington, some 48 miles further west. On the way, leaving Lake Ontario on the left, I passed through a very fine and most interesting country. In about a couple of hours the train pulled up at Guelph, and I at once made for the Wellington Hotel, a capitally-conducted house, well furnished and very comfortable, the charges being only a dollar and a half (or about 6s 3d) per day for bed, board, and attendance of a very superior kind. Having engaged my room and partaken of food and refreshment, I enquired as to the whereabouts of a gentleman to whom I was fortunate enough, as the sequel proved, to have a letter of introduction—Mr James Innes, proprietor and editor of the Guelph *Mercury*, a capitally-conducted and influential daily paper, with a weekly edition, published in the City. He lived, I was told, within two hundred yards of the hotel, and having sent him my card, he in a very short time made his appearance. He was on his way to a meeting of the St Andrew Society held that evening for the election of office-bearers, and I must accompany him. Nothing could have pleased me better. There I met a fine coterie of patriotic Scots—Highland and Lowland, all imbued with the genuine patriotic spirit which I had been so pleased to find among all our countrymen on that side, while all were, at the same time, none the less enthusiastic Canadians. Indeed, generally speaking, the two will be found together—a warm feeling for the old country, with a corresponding glow in favour of their adopted Canada. The man who is willing to forget his native country, its history, and the race from which he sprang, will as a rule make a poor citizen of the Dominion. Selfishness will be found to occupy the seat of the nobler sentiment, and this kind of citizen is not the type best calculated to adorn his country—native or adopted—or to benefit materially or mentally his fellow-countrymen. The members of the St Andrew Society of Guelph combine the two elements, and I was particularly pleased to have had an opportunity of spending some little time in their company at, and after their meeting—when we had the opportunity of enjoying some excellently sung Scotch songs, Scotch whisky, and Scotch sentiment.

Among the other gentlemen whom I had the pleasure of meeting here were John Mackenzie, from Lochbroom, Ross-shire, a gentleman who has been very successful in business; J. C. MacLagan; Hugh A. Stewart, a native of Tain, and an old pupil of the Royal Academy, Inverness, who is doing a good business as a lawyer and estate agent. Donald Maclean, born at Fluke Street, Inverness, holds a leading position in the Inland Revenue; while William Stewart, and G. B. Fraser, both of whom served their apprenticeship on the banks of the Ness, are the two leading drapers

in the city ; and another Invernessian, Evan Macdonald, is a prosperous farmer close to the city. Another enthusiastic Highlander whom I had the pleasure of meeting here was J. P. Macmillan, barrister, a native of Glengarry (Canada). E. F. B. Johnston, chief of the St Andrew Society, a genuine, warm-hearted Scot, with a literary turn and considerable ability, I found to be a general favourite as much among his Highland confreres of Guelph as among his own more particular friends from the south of Scotland.

My friend of the *Mercury*, whom I found to be a fine specimen of the Aberdonian type of the shrewd and clear-headed Scot, insisted upon my becoming his guest during my stay in the district, and I shall always remember with no small degree of pleasure the few days I spent in his comfortable house—so unpretentiously, but so kindly and hospitably entertained by his better-half, a fine specimen of the Scotch lady, and a native of Huntly. The history of this couple is most interesting, especially the hard struggles and ultimate success of Scotch pluck, perseverance, and natural ability in the person of this shrewd Aberdonian, who, unaided, has made for himself such a good position, and one in which he wields no small amount of influence and power for good. The history of his career and success would very well bear telling, and that very much to his credit. With his struggles against a thousand difficulties I strongly sympathised, and most heartily do I congratulate him upon his well-earned success. He was one of the chosen leet of two for representing his county in Parliament at the last general election for the Province of Ontario, and only missed being chosen as the Liberal candidate by four votes in favour of Mr Laidlaw, M.P., who now holds that honourable position, whom Mr Innes afterwards loyally supported, and with whom I had several agreeable chats at Guelph, and afterwards at Woodstock, where his son is proprietor and editor of an excellently conducted weekly newspaper.

Guelph is in the centre of a very rich district of country, and is a rapidly progressing city with a population of about 10,000. It is built on several hills with a small river running through it, altogether a very fine and commanding site. It contains several fine shops, mills, and two woollen factories—one of the latter the property of Captain MacCrae, a native of Ayrshire, whose ancestors, he told me, came originally from the ancient habitat of the Macraes, in Kintail, but who, after the battle of Sheriffmuir, in which his ancestors took a distinguished part, settled down in Ayrshire, and adopted the above mode of spelling their name. The goods mainly manufactured by him are ladies' and gentlemen's under-clothing of a very superior class. At the time I was in the city 110 hands were employed in the mill, while about a third of that number were employed outside finishing, and in other departments of manufacture. In addition to the *Mercury* Guelph supports another daily and two weekly papers—a number out of all proportion to the population, if we judge it by the same rule as at home ; but the same happy state of things prevails throughout the whole Dominion, where every one, almost from the cradle to the grave, reads his newspaper.

The Ontario School of Agriculture is in the immediate neighbourhood of Guelph, but as I have already described it, its management, and great advantages to the Province of Ontario, and even to the agricultural interests of the entire Dominion, in the *Free Press*, it must now be

passed over. The first tree was cut in the forest on the site of the future city so recent as 1827, by Galt, the novelist—a fact almost incredible to any one visiting the city at the present day, with its fine buildings, large stores, innumerable mills and factories, and all the other evidences of advancement and civilization. Here, perhaps as much as anywhere, I felt the depressing effect of parting with a lot of good friends, newly made, to push on alone into fresh fields and pastures new, again to meet strange faces in a strange land; but in my case it seemed always hitherto to be a parting with one set of good, warm-hearted friends, only to meet, if possible, others possessing the same good feeling in a more intense degree, according to me a warmer welcome than ever. Somewhat thus depressed, I left my friends at Guelph to visit a large colony of Highlanders which, I had been informed, settled down in

LUCKNOW,

Wellington
Bruce a small town in the county of Bruce, 93 miles from Guelph, on the the Wellington Gray and Bruce Railway, and 13 miles from Kincardine on Lake Huron, having a population of about 1400.

The county of Bruce is one of the most Celtic, or Highland, counties in the whole Dominion; and before introducing the reader to my enthusiastic friends of Lucknow and Kincardine, it may be well to give a few particulars regarding this rich territory, nearly all of which has been reclaimed by Highlanders from the North of Scotland and the Western Isles. The county is 100 miles long by 34 wide, with an area of considerably over a million acres of the most fertile land in Canada. A white man settled in it for the first time so recent as the year 1847, only 38 years ago. In 1852 the total assessed value of the county was only two thousand dollars. In 1870 it rose to about eight million, while the population was nearly fifty thousand, and in 1879 the assessment amounted to the almost incredible amount of twenty-four and a-half million dollars. It is governed by a Council of thirty-seven members, presided over by a Warden, Robert Baird, Esq., who kindly supplied me with these figures. The population is almost entirely Scotch, and mainly Highland. In the Township of Huron they are nearly all from the Island of Lewis, where they have named the principal town Dingwall. Most of those in the Township of Kincardine came from Cape Breton, while those occupying a fine settlement near Tiverton came almost entirely from the Island of Tiree, and are doing remarkably well. In fact the county is more distinctly Celtic in everything, except in their great comfort and affluence, than any part of the Highlands of Scotland at the present day. I am informed that the same may almost be said of the neighbouring county of Goderich, a district which I much regret I have been unable to visit, though within a few hours' distance of it.

But to return to Lucknow. While in the County of Glengarry some three weeks earlier, I received a letter, addressed to me at random, from *Dr MacCrimmon*, Chief of the Caledonian Society of Lucknow, requesting me to visit that place, and to deliver my lecture on "Flora Macdonald," regarding which and myself they had seen some notices in the newspapers. At the time I could make no promise, but on this Saturday I telegraphed from Guelph that I would be there on the following Monday, for about a day, but that a lecture (in consequence of the short time at my disposal) was out of the question. Having passed through a rich country

still exhibiting unmistakable signs of having been brought under the plough in recent years, the train pulled up at Lucknow station, where I was accosted by a stalwart, powerful-looking man, in broad Balmoral bonnet with red and white checked border, considerably over six feet high, who at once accosted me and asked if I was "Mr Mackenzie from Inverness." I pleaded guilty, whereupon I received a good shake of his powerful fist, and a most hearty salutation from this Hercules, who was no other than the Chief of the Caledonian Society of Lucknow, admittedly the first society of its kind, in all respects, in the whole Dominion. He had his conveyance waiting for me, and we drove to his own residence, where a few genial spirits met us at tea; after which we had to go to the Caledonian Hall, where the members of the Society were to meet, and, as I was now told, march to the hotel, led by the Society's piper, where it had been arranged, even upon such short notice as they had, to entertain the flying visitor from the Old Country to supper. This was an unexpected but a highly appreciated honour. Having met at the hall, and having been introduced to the members of the Society, we followed the *Piob-mhor* to the hotel, where we were soon enjoying ourselves to an excellently provided feast, under the presidency of the stalwart Chief of the Society, supported by the Reeve, or Mayor, and ex-Reeve, as well as by the leading citizens and merchants, most of whom were Highlanders. The local paper—the *Lucknow Sentinel*—devoted more than three columns to a report of our happy meeting, and it may just be as well here to give the description of what the editor described as "A Caledonian Banquet." Here it is:—"A complimentary supper was given in Mr Whitley's Hotel on Monday evening last, by the Lucknow Caledonian Society, to Mr A. Mackenzie, editor of the *Celtic Magazine*, Inverness, Scotland, a periodical devoted to preserving the past history and traditions of the Highlanders, and published in Inverness, Scotland. This gentleman is making a tour through this country to enquire into the condition of emigrants who have settled in Canada, for the purpose of ascertaining whether it would be desirable to encourage a certain class of small Highland farmers, called crofters, to emigrate. He has already made an extensive tour through the Lower Provinces and Ontario, and, as will be seen by his speech given below" (and to a report of which the *Sentinel* devoted a column), "is highly pleased with the country, and highly satisfied with the condition of his countrymen settled therein. He gives the land policy of the present government a bad character, and not without reason. He is a stout, portly, gentleman, with genial countenance and pleasing manner; and during his stay in our village he was the welcome guest of the Caledonian Society. The Society assembled at their hall, and from thence, headed by Piper Ross in full costume, marched to the hotel, where they found prepared for them a feast which was really magnificent, and well calculated to assure Mr Mackenzie that there was no danger of starvation in this country. A blessing having been asked, the company betook themselves to the diminishing of the rich repast placed before them. Among those present were Dr D. A. MacCrimmon, chief of the Society; George Kerr, Reeve; Malcolm Campbell, ex-Reeve; A. Macintyre, merchant; J. G. Smith, do.; D. Macintyre, do.; L. C. Macintyre, do.; W. Mackintosh, A. Macdonald, A. Macpherson, H. Ross, K. Campbell, J. Findlater, D. Macdonald, R.

Maccarrol, D. Macmillan, Thomas Macdonald, A. Finlayson, James Bryan, of the *Sentinel*, &c., &c."

After supper some excellent music was provided by the Society's piper, after which the loyal and patriotic toasts were duly honoured in capitally delivered speeches. Mr George Smith, in replying for "The Land we Left," spoke warmly of the old country, and stated that "without meaning any discredit to this, his adopted country, there were many fond memories of his native land still clinging to his heart. He referred to the prowess and achievements of his countrymen; to the historians and poets of Scotland, paying a high tribute to Scott and Burns, and, lastly, he eulogised the ladies of his native land, to whom as yet he had brought no discredit by taking a Canadian lady, and spoke mysteriously about going back to get a companion to share his grief and joys." Mr Malcolm Campbell, replying for "The Land we Live in," said "that when he came to this section twenty years ago, it took him three and a-half days to get over the short distance from here to Goderich," and referring to the rapid progress made in the district, he said that when he settled at Lucknow he had no idea of ever seeing a railway there; "but such was the energy of the Scotch pioneers, and the richness and productiveness of the soil that they now had a good railway, and there was scarcely a hundred acres in the county of Bruce without a tenant." Referring to the origin and success of this now famous Society, Dr MacCrimmon, replying to the toast of "The Caledonian Society of Lucknow," said that only "five years ago he called a meeting of a few villagers of Scotch nationality, and they have organised the Society which had gone on increasing in numerical strength and fame, especially the latter, until now, he believed, if not numerically, it was in enthusiasm and energy the first on the American continent. . . . He felt proud of the part the ladies took in the success of their games, referring particularly to the picturesque game of archery, in which the ladies were appropriately arrayed in Highland costume, and which was regarded by many as the great feature of the games."

I took the opportunity presented of referring to my grievance about the want of encouragement extended to poor Highlanders emigrating to the Dominion, and on this point Dr MacCrimmon remarked that, "It was something he could not understand how the poorer classes in the Old Country should continue to submit tamely to their treatment and present position while such a magnificent country as Canada was so ready and willing to receive them and so much needing emigrants. Instead of their government filling up the North-west and giving special encouragement to Mennonites and Icelanders, they should secure and encourage, for emigrants, their own countrymen—Scotch, English, Irish; and especially Highlanders, who were so loyal and brave, and who would always be ready to fight bravely and patriotically for their adopted country. The present system, if allowed to continue, would be ruinous to the country. He strongly denounced the land system now in vogue, and which only encouraged settlers able to bring with them 400 or 500 dollars. Hundreds of settlers came to the country penniless in the past, who were now their most prosperous and influential citizens, and why could not others do the same?" These wise sentiments were enthusiastically received and echoed by all present, and I trust they will yet, and before long, permeate even to, and influence the Emigration Department at Ottawa; and if this

they will not permit their countrymen to be neglected in such a fashion without making their influence felt in their behalf at the poll at the first General Election for the Dominion Parliament.

The land in the district was only sold in 1854, and Malcolm Campbell, already mentioned, was the first man who built a house in Lucknow. His father had the farm of Dell, near Kingussie, in the county of Inverness, for three consecutive leases of nineteen years. The son emigrated with very small means. He is now in a large way of business and in excellent circumstances. Ewen Macpherson, from Laggan, in the same district, and David Hutcheson, from Caithness, lay in the bush for a week, on their arrival, before they obtained a covering from the elements, but they now possess farms of 400 acres, worth, with the stock upon them, about thirty thousand dollars. The Macintyres, of whom there are here three brothers, came originally from Knapdale, their father being quite poor. His own farm sold at his death for eight thousand dollars, in addition to which the stock brought a large sum. He was able to leave several sons a farm of a hundred acres each. They are all in good circumstances, three of them being successful merchants in Lucknow. The Macdonalds above-mentioned only left the county of Inverness a few years ago, and I was glad to learn that they also were succeeding admirably. The village banker, D. E. Cameron, I found to be a Lochaber man, and there were MacHardys from Aberdeenshire, Connells, Smiths, and others from the Old Country in a prosperous condition, an acquisition to their adopted country, while they were all still proud of, and an honour to, their native land. After meeting a few friends at Mr Macintyre's hospitable table the following evening, and bidding farewell to Dr MacCrimmon's family, where I had the pleasure of finding his two handsome boys dressed in superb Highland costumes, with complete solid silver and Cairngorm mounted ornaments, and finding that I had nothing to pay at the hotel, where rooms had been placed at my disposal at the request and expense of the Society, I bade farewell to my enthusiastic friends, and at 10 P.M. took the train to

KINCARDINE,

thirteen miles further on, situated on Lake Huron. Here I met several genuine Highlanders whose hearts warmed to the tartan. The population is between four and five thousand, mostly Highlanders. The Mayor is a Macpherson; and among the leading merchants I found Archibald Maclean, who is also a member of the School Board; John Macleod; D. Macinnes, a cousin of Mr Macintyre, Kiel, Argyleshire, and of Mr Cameron, of MacNiven & Cameron, Edinburgh; Donald Mackenzie; and last but not least, Daniel Cameron, a native of Lawers, Perthshire, which place he left in 1855 to seek his fortune in the Far West. He has been in an extensive way of business, having manufactured a great portion of the brick of which the town is built. He is also a member of the School Board, and one of the three Licensing Commissioners for the South Riding, or southern half of the county of Bruce. He has been able to give an excellent education to the members of his family; his eldest son, having just finished a distinguished course at the end of which he occupied the proud position of gold medallist for Natural Science in the University of Toronto. His specimens of minerals form the best private collection I have seen in all Canada, and I had the pleasure of carrying away a few—the possession of which I esteem very highly. Here I also found another Dr MacCrimmon. Indeed, few but Highland names are

to be seen or met with, and the Gaelic language is spoken almost universally, and with great purity.

There had been a few inches of snow, and a somewhat keen frost for several days, but while at Kincardine it came on a perfect storm, the lake close by looking about the ugliest thing I ever saw, even at sea. Nothing could live in it, and several ships, I afterwards found, had been wrecked during the night and driven ashore. I rather enjoyed the tempest, and to add fury to the flames, or rather flames to the fury, a fire broke out about two o'clock in the morning, immediately opposite the hotel in which I lodged. The noise soon woke me up. I dressed, wrapped myself up in my tartan plaidie, marched out among the crowd, and stood looking on while the wooden structure was being furiously burned to the ground. I had the pleasure of enjoying a real Canadian storm, with special accompaniments, and one, I was informed, which was seldom surpassed even in Canada during the most severe winter.

A somewhat peculiar incident occurred here, which, though of more interest to myself than to any one else, I may be allowed to relate. A few minutes after my arrival I called at a Highlander's place of business, and, going in, I addressed him in Gaelic. He answered in the same language. A man standing outside the counter soon joined in our conversation, which turned on my visit to the Lower Provinces, and he asked me if I had been to Cape Breton. Answering in the affirmative, he became anxious to know who I met, and what parts there I had visited. He seemed to know all the place and people. I told him I had been on the Island of Boularderie, visiting some uncles of mine. Naming them, he at once said that he knew them well, and, to my surprise continued, "another of them, John, lives here. He has just sold his farm, and is leaving to-morrow for Michigan, in the United States." I had heard of this uncle, but I had no more idea of being within a few miles of him than I then had of jumping into Lake Huron. He was expected at two o'clock to come in from his farm, a few miles out, to settle for the price of it with the Mayor, who was his agent in the matter, and in point of fact, a few minutes later he was pointed out to me coming up the main street with a pair of horses. I walked along to meet him, and said in Gaelic, "Cia mar tha sibh?" He was surprised at the salutation. I told him I was his nephew. He could not believe it. He did not hear a word of any of his relatives in Scotland for many years. He was of course quite ignorant of my being on the American continent—even of my existence. I afterwards saw his wife, and some members of his family comfortably married and settled in the place. It is unnecessary to add that we thoroughly enjoyed all the time we had at our disposal, talking about our respective families and experiences. He left Ross-shire for Cape Breton, thousands of miles from where he then was, in 1842, since which date he has never written to his friends in Scotland; and to meet under such conditions, it will be admitted, was not a little remarkable. Having parted with my Kincardine friends I returned to Guelph, where I spent another day, after which I started, by the Great Western Railway of Canada, on my way to Woodstock and London, returning *via* Hamilton to Niagara, and New York, on my way home. To these places I shall ask the reader to accompany me in the next, by which time he must, I expect, like myself, be getting a little tired of "The Editor in Canada,"

A.M.

THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE POEMS OF OSSIAN.

JAMES MACPHERSON, of Ossianic celebrity, first saw the light at Ruthven, opposite the village of Kingussie, in the year 1738. The cottage in which he was born was occupied by his mother for years after her son made himself a name in the world of letters, and is, we believe, still standing. In his boyhood Macpherson attended the parish school of Kingussie; and thereafter the Inverness Grammar School. After finishing his studies at Inverness he attended the Universities of Aberdeen and Edinburgh, with the intention of going forward to the ministry of the Scotch Church. During part of his college course he taught the parochial school of his native parish, until offered the situation of tutor in the family of Graham of Balgowan—the father of Sir Thomas Graham, Lord Lyndoch, one of Wellington's ablest generals. Young Graham was Macpherson's pupil, and was afterwards married to the Honourable Mary Cathcart, second daughter of Charles, ninth Lord Cathcart, and sister to the fourth Duchess of Athole. After seventeen years of married life his wife, to whom he was tenderly attached, died; and he was affected so by the loss that he sought relief from his sorrow in foreign travels. During these travels Graham was induced to join a profession for which nature had so highly qualified him, and to which he had a predisposition from boyhood—being favourably disposed, it is said, by his tutor's enthusiastic admiration of Fingal and his Celtic heroes. In 1758 Macpherson published "The Highlander," a poem in six cantos; and an ode to the Earl Marshall—"an attempt," as he styles it, "after the manner of Pindar." He also published some minor poems in the periodicals of those times. These productions of his muse brought him little credit, and would long since have been forgotten but for his connection with Ossianic remains. But if Macpherson was not a great poet, these pieces show that he had talent—that he could appreciate good poetry, and that, like his contemporary, Jerome Stone, the Dunkeld teacher, he was an enthusiastic admirer of the Gaelic poetry of his native Highlands. It is believed that Stone's collections and translations first suggested to him the idea of making a similar collection of his own. Accordingly, when on a visit with his pupil at the Manse of Logierait, he showed his collections to his friend Mr Fergusson, afterwards the well-known Dr Adam Fergusson. Mr Fergusson was the son of the parish minister of Logierait, who, to his other accomplishments, added a superior knowledge of Gaelic and its poetry. Fergusson was attracted by the beauty of Macpherson's translations, and urged him to enlarge his collection. And intending to go the following summer with his pupil to Moffat, he gave him a letter of introduction to Mr John Home, author of the "Tragedy of Douglas," who went there for the benefit of his health. This was in the year 1759. Macpherson met Home, and showed him his English translation of Ossianic poems. Home was as much charmed with them as Fergusson was. He begged of Macpherson the loan of his MSS., and permission to submit them to the inspection of Dr Hugh Blair, professor of Belles Lettres in the Uni-

versity of Edinburgh. Blair stood high as a competent judge of literary performances. The result was that he had an interview with Macpherson, from whom he understood that several such poems, of equal merit, were afloat in the Highlands of Scotland. He urged Macpherson to translate all the poems in his possession for publication; assuring him of a warm reception. Blair tells us that Macpherson showed extreme reluctance to this; affirming his inability to do justice to the spirit and force of the originals, as would satisfy the public taste. But he gave way eventually to the solicitations of friends; and, in 1760, his translations were published in a small quarto volume, with the title of "Fragments of ancient Gaelic poetry collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and translated from the Gaelic or Erse language." Dr Blair prefixed an introduction, and according to his anticipations, as we see from the following letter to Mr Henry Mackenzie, author of the "Man of Feeling," the work became immediately popular. "These fragments," says Dr Blair, "drew much attention, and excited among all persons of taste and letters an earnest desire to recover if possible all those considerable remains of Gaelic poetry which are said still to exist in the Highlands." The only bar was Macpherson's persistent reluctance to undertake the task; urging, as in the case of the "fragments," his inability to do the poems justice, and also his limited acquaintance with Gaelic. We have the evidence of Strathmashie, Captain Morrison, and others, to corroborate the truth of this, a fact which ought in fairness to be remembered in forming a judgment of the genuineness of these remains. It is unjust as well as ungenerous not to give Macpherson credit for sincerity in his reluctance to undertake collecting and translating these poems. Dr Samuel Johnson says of the Edinburgh of those days, "that it was a very hotbed of genius." Under the auspices of Blair, the circle of celebrities to which Johnson refers, united in using their influence to secure Macpherson's services—judging correctly that whatever his own felt disqualifications were, no other individual was equally well qualified for the work. He was invited to an entertainment, at which he met men of rank and talent, as Lord Elibank, Principal Robertson, Mr John Home, Dr Adam Fergusson, and others; all intent upon the work of collecting and preparing for the press a translation of these Ossianic remains. They offered to defray all expenses by a subscription from themselves and others similarly interested. His reluctance at length gave way, and he agreed to undertake his celebrated Highland tour, which has preserved to the world these curious literary remains which, but for his industry and perseverance, would in all probability have been irrecoverably lost. This was in 1760. Macpherson was in his twenty-second year, vigorous and enthusiastic enough to do all that could be done, and all that was expected of him.

The districts through which he travelled were chiefly the north-western portions of Inverness-shire, the Isle of Skye, and adjoining islands—"places," says the Highland Society's report, "that from their remoteness and state of manners at that period, most likely to afford a pure and genuine state of the ancient traditionary tales and poems of which the recital then formed the favourite amusement of the long and idle winter evenings of the Highlanders." During this journey he transmitted from time to time, to Dr Blair, a record of results—the manuscripts he got possession of—and the poems he transcribed from the recitation of bards

and others. In 1762 he published in two volumes quarto, "Fingal, an ancient Epic poem in six books, with other lesser poems." In 1763 he published "Temora, an Epic poem in eight books, with other poems"—all of them professing to be the productions of Ossian, a Caledonian Prince and bard, and translated from the Gaelic language. They became popular at once with the English reading public; and were translated into several European languages. Ossian's poems was one of the few books that the Great Napoleon carried about with him, and which he frequently perused during his meteor-like military career.

It was a matter of wonder even to those who raised no doubt as to the genuineness of these remains, how they could have been preserved for so long a period among an illiterate people. Others entirely denied their authenticity; and, taking credit to themselves for being more acute than their fellows, denounced the whole affair as a forgery—a gross fabrication attempted to be imposed upon an easy and credulous public. Pinkerton, the historian, who ranks among the latter, expresses himself in the following elegant and complimentary manner:—"The Celts are, of all savages, the most deficient in understanding. Wisdom and ingenuity may be traced among Laplanders and Negroes; but among the Celts none of native growth." "Since the keen and searching examination of Mr Laing," says Sir James Mackintosh, "these poems have fallen in reputation, as they lost the character of genuineness. They have been admired by all the nations, and by all the men of genius in Europe. No other imposture in literary history approaches them in the splendour of their course." But the most violent, as well as the most influential of the opponents of Ossian is Dr Samuel Johnson—the great literary arbiter of his day—to whose judgment so much deference was given; but who in this instance gives a verdict on a subject he was very imperfectly conversant with. Johnson was inveterately, nay unreasonably prejudiced against everything Scotch; and did more than all others to originate and propagate the opinion that Macpherson's Ossian was a forgery. That he, and those who sympathised with him, believed what they affirmed, is the only apology we can make for violent and senseless vituperation. The following is Johnson's manifesto. And as it contains in substance all that has been advanced on his side of the controversy, we give it in full. The reader will find it in his "Journey to the Western Islands;" and will judge for himself, from what follows, how much of mere self-assertion or how much of actual fact it contains:—

"I suppose," Johnson says, "my opinion of the poems of Ossian is already discovered. I believe they never existed in any other form than that which we have seen. The editor or author never could show the originals, nor can they be shown by any other. To revenge reasonable incredulity, by refusing evidence, is a degree of insolence with which the world is not yet acquainted; and stubborn audacity is the last refuge of guilt. It would be easy to show them if he had them. But whence could they be had? It is too long to be remembered; and the language formerly had nothing written. He has doubtless inserted names that circulate in popular stories, and may have translated some wandering ballads, if any can be found, and the names of some of the images being recollected, make an inaccurate auditor imagine by the help of Caledonian bigotry, that he has formerly heard the whole."

It is said that some men of integrity profess to have heard part of it ; but they all heard them when they were boys ; and it was never said that any of them could repeat six lines.

"The Scots have something to plead for their easy reception of an improbable fiction. They are seduced by their fondness for their supposed ancestors. A Scotchman must be a very sturdy moralist who does not love Scotland better than truth. He will always love it better than inquiry, and if falsehood flatters his vanity, will not be very diligent to detect it."

Macpherson's own narrative of the way in which these poems were procured and given to the world is simple and natural. He tells us, that at the urgent request of others, he reluctantly engaged in this work, the success of which he was doubtful of, because of conscious unfitness as he thought, for the performance of it. This may be ascribed to dissimulation, in order to give "his forgeries" the appearance of genuineness. But the more we consider his statements, and in connection with what afterwards transpired, the more persuaded are we, that he honestly believed what he said. The "Fragments" that led the way to the larger collection were incidentally brought to the notice of the eminent men who patronised him ; and their subsequent importunity was just the natural sequence of events ; and involved no art or device or stratagem of one playing at a game of literary imposture. The frank and free account he sends to Blair of his progress and success during his tour of inquiry, goes all on the same lines. So does the fact that he availed himself of the assistance—as that of Strathmashie, the Knoydart teacher, Captain Morrison, and others—because of the superior acquaintance of some of them with Gaelic, and their skill in deciphering Gaelic manuscripts—facts inconsistent with the supposition that he was contriving a barefaced literary imposture. Prosecuting his mission in this open way, he writes in October 1760—"I have met with a number of old manuscripts in my travels. The poetical part of them I have endeavoured to secure." In another letter he says, "I have been lucky enough to lay my hands on a pretty complete poem and truly epic concerning Fingal." "Fingal," as we said, was published in 1762—with several minor poems—and "Temora" in 1763, with the original Gaelic of one of the books of it, together with five minor poems. He did more. To silence the clamour of his opponents and satisfy the wishes of friends, he deposited the originals, along with his old Gaelic manuscripts, in the hands of Becket and De Hondt, his London publishers, for public inspection ; and advertised in the newspapers that he had done so. He also offered, if a sufficient number of subscribers came forward, to publish the Gaelic originals. What could he do more to satisfy the scruples of friends or foes ? Yet it appears that during the time these documents lay with his publishers—nearly a year—not a sceptic availed himself of the opportunity to have his doubts removed ; nor did the necessary number of subscribers to the Gaelic originals come forward. Need we wonder if, after this, he became indifferent, and even supercilious, to men who, like Johnson, maintained and affirmed that "he had no originals to show."

Those who denied the authenticity of these remains did so on two grounds. Living, as Ossian did, in the third or fourth century of the Christian era, they maintained the improbability, if not the impossibility,

of transmitting poems of such length by memory to modern times. At the same time they denied the possible existence of any Gaelic manuscripts as would sufficiently account for such transmission. "It is too long to be remembered," says Johnson, "and the language formerly had nothing written."

Let us mention some well-known facts bearing on these statements. We have, for example, the poems of John Lom, the Lochaber bard, those of Mary Macleod, the Harris poetess, and many others of earlier date; all recently collected from the recitation of people who lived more than a century—in some instances two centuries—after the authors passed away. We have in the "Book of the Dean of Lismore" a piece of poetry from the recent recitation of a Caithness woman almost word for word as it was transcribed three centuries previously by Dean Macgregor. Duncan Ban Macintyre, the Breadalbane bard, could neither read nor write, but such were his powers of memory that he could repeat easily all the poems he ever composed, published since in a bulky volume. One of these poems—Bendouran—contains nearly a thousand lines. All of them together, in length equal at least to Ossian's Fingal, were taken down by a clergyman from Macintyre's oral recitation. The highest grade among the ancient bards was "Aoisdana." These chiefs of their order attained to eminence by their literary acquirements as well as by their talents. An "Aoisdana," to qualify him for this honour, must be able to rehearse from memory not fewer than one hundred poems of various lengths—probably as much verse as we have in the whole of our Ossianic remains. The bardic institution was hereditary in the families of Highland chiefs—in many instances tracing their origin back to times which we may almost call mythical. What improbability or impossibility is there, therefore, that poems equal in length to those of Ossian should be transmitted by means of oral tradition? Or let us take, for example, the music of the great Highland bagpipe, of which we have collections made not so very long since by Macdonald, Mackay, and others. Many of these pieces are very old; one of them as old as the days of Somerled, Thane of Argyle, who lived in the twelfth century. All these pieces have been transmitted to present times by means of memory. We have no evidence that musical notation as now in use existed formerly in the Highlands; and if hundreds of pibrochs were so transmitted from generation to generation, why not poetry as well? Nor, as we see from the testimony of Professor Max Muller, is this peculiar to the Scotch Highlanders only. "The Fins," he tells us in his *Science of Languages*, "have their literature; and above all, their popular poetry, which bears witness to a high intellectual development in times which we may call mythical. Epic song still lives among the poorest, recorded by oral tradition alone, and preserving all the features of a perfect metre and of a more ancient language. From the mouths of the aged an epic poem has been collected, equalling the *Iliad* in length and completeness; nay, if we can forget for a moment all that in our youth we learned to call beautiful—not less beautiful. Why, then, could not our Celtic ancestors living among these surrounding Caledonian hills do what the Fins did?

We shall now notice briefly the evidence we have from the testimony of individuals to whose veracity no reasonable objection can be made. These men could have no possible or conceivable motive for saying what

they say than just to say the truth. We extract the following from the report of the Highland Society, where the reader will find a great deal more of similar import. The Society's inquiry, of which their report is a summary, was occasioned by the statements already referred to on the part of those who denied the authenticity of these poems.

"The Rev. Mr Macpherson, minister of Sleat, writing in 1763, the year after 'Fingal' was published, says he met with people who could repeat eight pieces of 'Fingal' as it is published by Macpherson. The Rev. Mr Macnicol of South Uist tells us that he found people who could recite parts of books ii., iv., and v. of 'Fingal,' and the whole of the poem of 'Darthula.' The Rev. Mr Macleod Ross of Mull says that he can personally testify to the genuineness of pieces of books ii., iii., and iv. of 'Fingal,' that he had these pieces when a boy from a Skye man. The Rev. Mr Macaulay, military chaplain in Edinburgh, writing in 1764, says he was informed by Lieutenant Macnicol of Glenorchy that he found individuals who could recite parts of books iii., iv., and v. of 'Fingal'—also the battle of Lora, and the poem of Dartula almost to the end; and also pieces of great length of Timora and Caraghthura—almost word for word as Macpherson had given them. The Rev. Donald Macleod of Glenelg says it was in his house Macpherson got his description of Cuchulin's chariot, from a schoolmaster and another man of the name of Macleod. He also heard these men recite the part of Fingal, book iii., which describes his voyage to Lochlin. Gillies published his collection of Gaelic poems in 1786, in which he gives Malvina's dream, and Ossian's reply, amounting to fifty-seven lines, and quite as Macpherson gives them in the poem of Cromla. The number of lines obtained in this way amount to nine hundred—word for word almost as they are to be found in Macpherson's original Gaelic Ossian. It will be borne in mind that these originals were not printed till 1807, so that none of them could possibly have access to them.

That Macpherson himself collected many of these poems in the same way, we have, besides his own testimony, that of the gentlemen who assisted him. Macpherson of Strathmashie says—"I assisted him in collecting them, and took down from oral tradition, and transcribed by far the greatest part of those pieces he has published. I have carefully compared the translations with the originals, and find it amazingly literal, even in such a degree as in some measure to preserve the cadence of the Gaelic versification." Mr Ewen Macpherson, the Knoydart teacher, says—"The declarant was with Mr Macpherson three or four weeks; in course of which he took down poems of Ossian from the recitation of several individuals at different places, which he gave to Mr Macpherson." This same person tells us that he was afterwards presented with a copy of the printed "Fingal," "and that he was of opinion that the translation was excellent."

So much then as to Macpherson's indebtedness to oral tradition for these poems. But we are not necessarily to suppose that he obtained all his materials from this source alone. We find, on the contrary, that he drew largely upon the manuscripts he got; how largely we cannot say, though it is not impossible, or improbable, they contained as much, or more, of these poems than he got from oral recitations. He says himself—"I have met with a number of old manuscripts in my travels. The poetical part of them I have endeavoured to secure." Mr Malcolm Macpherson of Society will do its duty, as I expect such a patriotic Association to do,

Scalpa says in his affidavit, September 1800—"The declarant's brother, Alexander, had a Gaelic manuscript in quarto, about an inch and a quarter thick. That he informed him he had given it to Mr Macpherson, who carried it with him." Strathmashie says—"I took down from oral tradition, and I transcribed *from old manuscripts*, by far the greatest part of those pieces he has published." Mr Ewen Macpherson testifies that he got from Clanranald's bard "a manuscript of the size of a New Testament, which contained some of the poems of Ossian." He also tells us that Clanranald gave him an order on Lieutenant Macdonald, Edinburgh, for "the Leabhar Dearg"—a Gaelic folio which contained poems by Ossian. The Rev. Mr Gallie of Kincardine, Strathspey, says, March 1799—"When Macpherson returned from his tour he came to my house. He produced *several volumes* small octavo, or rather large duodecimo, in the Gaelic language and character, being the poems of Ossian and other bards. I remember perfectly that many of these volumes were said to have been collected by Clanranald's bard about the beginning of the fourteenth century." We have the following interesting statement given us by Sir John Sinclair in his dissertation anent the authenticity of these poems. Previous to 1745 the Rev. John Farquharson was Catholic priest at Strathglass, Inverness-shire. At the suggestion of Mr Fraser of Culbokie, he filled a folio volume three inches thick with ancient Gaelic poetry. Farquharson carried this folio to Douay, in French Flanders, where it was repeatedly seen by Dr Cameron and four other clergymen between 1763 and 1767. In 1766 Macpherson's Ossian was sent to Farquharson. These clergymen saw him frequently comparing it with the contents of his folio. He had all, he said, of the poems Macpherson translated, as well as other Ossianic poems of equal if not greater merit. The letters of the Rev. Mr Macgillivray, who knew Farquharson and saw his folio, are so minute and circumstantial as to leave no doubt as to the truth of what he says.

How can we resist evidence such as this—clear, unanimous, consistent, and consecutive! These men had no conceivable motive in saying what they say, beyond saying the truth. If, therefore, we reject such testimony in favour of the genuineness of these remains, on what grounds are we to believe in the genuineness of any literary remains? We are not discussing the point of editorship. An editor must have discretionary powers within just limits. Yet these facts we have adduced go to show that even as editor Macpherson did his work faithfully and conscientiously, and has given us these Ossianic remains very much as he himself received them. Diogenes Laertius says that Solon collected the Homeric poems. Cicero says it was the work of Pisistratus. Plato ascribes it to Hipparchus. Possibly they may have passed through the editorial alembic of all three. The originals, however, are Homer's, be the editorial merits what they may. Similarly, we conclude, whatever the merits or demerits of Macpherson as editor, substantially we have in accordance with his own testimony, as well as his coadjutor's, sufficient evidence that the originals of Ossian—anyhow as he received them—are now in our possession.

These poems brought Macpherson a large sum. His situation as surveyor of the Leeward Islands secured him a pension of £300 per annum. His history of Great Britain from the restoration of Charles II. to the accession of the House of Hanover brought him £3000. His

situation as secretary for the Nabob of Arcot was a mine of wealth; and so faithfully did he do duty in this office, that his son besought him to take the management of his affairs, and sent him a bond for £20,000, but which he did not live to realise. He purchased the property of Belleville from the family of Mackintosh of Borlum, which formerly was known by the name of Raits. Here he resided annually during his intervals of repose from public duty, and displayed uniform kindness and generosity towards his native fellow-countrymen, with whom he was very popular. As an instance of his generosity, it is said that when offered on liberal terms the estate of Cluny, sequestered because of the Chief's attachment to the House of Stuart, he declined the offer, and exerted himself to have it restored to the original owner. He was Member for Camelford from 1780 till 1790. He died, February 17th, in his own house at Belleville, pariah of Alvie, in 1796, at the comparatively early age of fifty-eight years; and, at his own request, he was buried in Westminster Abbey, in Poets' Corner. The Gaelic originals of his Ossian were not published till 1807 forty-five years after the publication of his English translation of them. He left a sum of money in his will for this purpose. For an explanation of this long delay, for which he was so much and perhaps justly blamed, we refer the reader to Professor Blackie's chapter on the Ossianic controversy in his volume on the language and literature of the Scottish Highlands, which will, we are sure, satisfy all unprejudiced inquirers.

KENMORE.

ALLAN SINCLAIR.

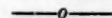
HIGHLAND BOOKS.—The *Highlander*, referring to the recent visit of the Celtic editors to Canada, and the United States of America, publishes the following:—"It has always been felt that it was not safe for a man to publish Highland books, for example, because there were so few to buy them. Many did not read; there were still more who had become such victims of imported prejudices that they thought they would not be sustaining their own respectability if they showed a predilection for the literature and language of their own race; a still greater number were too poor to indulge in the luxury of dear books—for Highland books were always dearer in proportion than English ones. In one sentence, our Highland people were not to be relied upon to buy the books, and there were very few who could afford to publish at a loss, although, unfortunately, most who have published have done so to very small pecuniary advantage. But there was, all this time, a large Highland constituency in the colonies and in the United States; but there was next to no communication with them. They had been driven by vicious laws in this country to cut out a way for themselves in the woods of Canada, or to work in the mines of California or Australia, and they grow old in absolute ignorance of the fact that there was any Gaelic or Highland literature to think of, to buy, or to help into publicity. The publishers did not know where these people were; and it is absolutely astonishing how little the families here and in America know of each other. But let us hope that the wall of partition which stood thus between the Highlanders at and from home has in some measure been broken through, and that the authors of Highland books may calculate upon a wider and safer circulation; that the colonists, &c., may, in hundreds of cases at any rate, indulge their love of home by reading some of the literature which has got into print since they left this country, and that by this widening of the area of operations, the few who have been reading will do so in future at a smaller sacrifice."

DERMOND.

A TALE OF KNIGHTLY DEEDS DONE IN OLD DAYS.

—Tennyson.

BOOK II.—“A SYLVAN COURT.”



CHAPTER X.

What art thou? and how com'st thou hither
Where no man ever comes, but that sad dog
Who brings me food, to make misfortune live.

—Richard II., Shak.

SCARCELY a week was allowed to elapse after the storming of Dunkerlyne ere the treacherous Cormac Doil found himself named successor to Brian, the heroic father of Dermond. The flag bearing the black-raven device of the dead chieftain was committed to the flames, while the banner of Lorn was floating proudly and defiantly from the highest tower. Cyril, his son Clement, and all the faithful supporters of the Viking were cast into the dungeons; and a grim silence dwelt in the hall which once rung with the laughter of a hundred brave and fearless men.

There were numerous conjectures as to the fate of young Dermond, but the idea most generally entertained was that he had met his death by the hand of Bruce himself in the struggle which took place near the pass of Balquhiddier. Great as were the deeds of the King at Dalry, many were inclined to accredit him with a number of extraordinary exploits which were neither consistent with truth nor probability, and one of the stories went to the effect that he had single-handed encountered the young chief, with ten of his men, and slain them in a body. Others attested that after being taken prisoners, Dermond and Olave were subjected to the most excruciating tortures, and then hanged and quartered. Needless to say the fair Bertha suffered the greatest anxiety regarding the fate of her lover and champion, who she believed had evidently perished in endeavouring to carry out her behest. Kate, her sprightly waiting-maid, was also seized with an agonising fear for the safety of the gallant Norseman. The rebellion of Brian, followed by the storming of Dunkerlyne, the fatal fight with the chieftain, and the imprisonment of his vassals, gave additional pain to the forlorn damsels; and while they had every desire to see Dermond and Olave safely back from the battle, there were many reasons for hoping that they would not return to Dunolly or Dunkerlyne without being fully prepared to resist the merciless vengeance of John of Lorn. Day after day Bertha looked for the arrival of her father and Dermond in vain, and the reports that continued to pour in confirmed more than ever the first impression that the young chieftain had fallen among the slain. In order to suppress all outward appearances of grief, she took a prominent part in all the festivals and merrymakings with every semblance of careless gaiety, and in the eyes of Nora and the rest of her relatives at the Court of Lorn, all traces of her passion for the son of the Viking had vanished.

The summer wore round, and Bertha had evidently spent it cheerfully.

but as the dull, cold days of autumn approached, the strong hope which had hitherto sustained her gave way, and despair took possession of her heart. Her eye began to lose its lustre, her cheek grew paler, and an expression of vacant languor overspread the calm beauty of her features.

The split arrow was again circulated among the island and inland fiefs of John of Lorn, who having been roused by the bribes and solicitations of the English King, determined to make another terrible effort for the extirpation of Bruce and his handful of followers, who were still taking advantage of the shelter and security afforded by the Highland woods and mountains.

Meanwhile, Cyril was wasting the declining years of his life in one of the dungeons down in the heart of Dunkerlyne rock far beneath the foundations of the castle, where scarcely a gleam of sunlight could penetrate. He had spent a miserable summer, and no one had deigned to intrude upon his solitude save the attendant who brought him food, and even that functionary was not too regular in his visits.

As he paced from one end of his dungeon to the other, lifting his eyes upwards, thinking of the bright skies above, and listening to the long, monotonous roar of the waves on the rocks below, he was startled on hearing the clang of feet on the stone passages, and the sound of several voices awoke the muttering echoes of the labyrinth of corridors. A while and the key groaned in the rusty lock, the door screeched as it was flung open, and the glare of a torch blinded the old man so much that he could not see who entered.

"What, ho! my Lord of Rathland," said the intruder. "What ails thy sight? Dost thou not know me."

Rubbing his eyes and shading them from the offensive glare of the flambeau, Cyril answered—"So long, good sir, have I been excluded from the light of day, I know not whether my sight remains or not. At first I believed 'twas some one come with news of goodly import, or at least to cheer me in my dreadful loneliness, but with that voice there rings within my memory so much of bygone evil that I fear me thou com'st but to outweigh my great calamities."

"Tush with thee, prattling old man," resumed the visitor, "thou wouldst but mar the news I bring with words both strange and unnatural. Come, brood no more, but think of liberty, 'twill be the sweeter since so long denied thee."

"I want it not, for now this prison's the refuge of my waning life. If thou hast aught to say, tell it quickly, as I long to learn what news there is, however bad it may be."

"Peace with you then and hear. Lorn has resolved to make another desperate effort to capture the villainous Bruce, and he offers liberty to all who care to take the oath of fealty."

By this time Cyril had partially regained his sight and scattered recollections, and bending his eyes on the speaker, he recognised the successor to the chieftainship of Dunkerlyne. Indignation instantly flashed from his eye, and he replied with great firmness, "Thy treachery to my kinsman forbids my acceptance of any favour at thy hands. Weak as I am I might be forced to grapple at thy throat, but I have better need to think of something else besides revenge, which will assuredly overtake and crush thee. My son, Clement, is young in years and strong in arms,

unlike the ruin you see before you, and doubtless he may live to do what his father is unwilling or unable to accomplish, but why should he waste his youthful strength by rotting in a dungeon. Give him liberty if he cares to have it."

"As for the gallant Clement," said Cormac, "you need have no fear. He has long since regained his freedom, and is now doing duty at Dunolly where he has every prospect of advancement."

"What!" exclaimed Cyril, with no small amount of amazement. "I trust that is no lie. Free, did you say, without having sought to see his father?"

"He sought but was refused. His duty does not extend beyond the walls of Dunolly."

"Slavery, indeed, worse than imprisonment."

"Be it what it may, there is hope for a speedy change."

"Has he accepted Lorn's proposals then?"

"No, not exactly so, but he has agreed to mine."

"And what, forsooth, may thine be?"

"Honourable, I trust," said Cormac Doil, with an affectation of dignity which amused as well as exasperated the Irish chieftain, who exclaimed—"Of a surety then the devil hath turned saint?"

"Peace with you, good sir," said Cormac, evidently much irritated. "You shall yet find my words come true, and the devil scarcely so black as he is painted. Clement stipulates for your liberty with leave to return to Rathland. A few days hence and all shall be accomplished."

Cyril remained silent for a few moments almost unable to control his emotion. When he was able to speak he said, "If this is indeed so, and thou canst assure me that there is naught dishonourable in the matter, I shall yet be pleased to spend the remaining years of my life in the hall of my ancestors, but if I find that you have not acted uprightly by my son, I shall use the liberty you give me for the chastisement of your presumption and revenging the wrongs you have heaped upon me."

"Patience," exclaimed the wily Cormac, "and you shall hear all from Clement's own lips. Meanwhile you remain a prisoner, but I shall endeavour to increase your comfort till you regain your full measure of liberty. What, ho! there, Donald, bring me the key of these shackles, and tell Alister to prepare the pallet in the secret bedchamber for the Lord of Rathland."

Cyril soon found himself the solitary occupant of a little turret chamber high above the sea, and with a narrow window looking towards the shores of Ireland. The change from the horrible dungeon beneath was altogether delightful, and as the evening became beautifully calm, a strong sense of rest took possession of the chieftain's mind—a sense of rest which he had not felt for many a long and weary day. He attributed his increased comfort and prospect of liberty to the adventurous spirit of his son, Clement, and was proud in the thought that the lad would be able to maintain the reputation of his stalwart and daring forefathers. It was late before he thought of retiring to rest; it was later still before he could fall asleep; and when he awoke he was startled to find that he was not alone in the chamber. Day had not yet dawned, but the dim light of the morning was sufficient to distinguish the presence of Jarloff, the minstrel, who was arrayed in bonnet and plaid, and with his harp strung across his shoulders, as if ready for a journey.

On perceiving the look of surprise on Cyril's face, he said, in a hard and by no means apologetic tone, "I have come perhaps unsought and unexpected."

As he spoke there was a weird expression of melancholy on his withered features, and a wild, wandering look in his bloodshot eyes. The death of Brian and the uncertainty of the fate of Dermond and Olave, had evidently wrought havoc in the mind of the faithful Norseman, and eccentricity had developed into madness.

"Nay, you are welcome, good Jarloff," said Cyril, soothingly. "Doubtless you come to congratulate me on my altered circumstances."

"Let the devil congratulate, Sir Chief, if he will, but what appears to be good is too often the beginning of evil. But more of this anon. Haste ye, dress quickly, trust me, and follow."

Convinced at once that the words of the minstrel, spoken so earnestly, had some foundation or another, he resolved to commit himself into his hands, but not before questioning him further as to the intentions of Cormac Doil and the safety of Clement.

"Clement is indeed safe," said Jarloff, "but I fear me he has lent himself too much to the schemes of the traitor of Dunkerlyne. His ransom, however, is yet to be paid—a ransom I trust his heart and conscience may rebel against."

"Now by my faith," said Cyril, instantly becoming aware that some vile plot was afoot, "I have indeed been played upon, and Clement has been deceived. Credulous wretch! If for one moment I stood beside him my dirk would save him from dishonour."

"Speak not so loud, or we are undone," said Jarloff. "He may yet escape from the clutches of these bloodthirsty schemers to the camp of the Bruce, there to invoke vengeance against the Lord of Lorn."

"What then is the ransom you speak of?" inquired Cyril.

Jarloff wandered for some time, after which he proceeded to say—"Cormac Doil has fallen desperately in love with the fair Bertha of Dunolly, but Lorn has refused to consent to his making any advances. Being unable to win her by fair means, he has resolved to win her by foul. Knowing that Clement possesses a goodly presence, with the art of initiating himself into the graces of the gentler sex, he conceived the idea of obtaining his liberty and placing him near to the person of Bertha in Lorn's service, so that they might come to regard each other. To crown the crafty scheme, Cormac Doil has exhausted every artifice in order to obtain circumstantial accounts of the death of Dermond, and although I cannot aver that the young chieftain and my gallant Olave are free from danger, I have no doubt they may yet survive their captivity, and live to revenge the storming of Dunkerlyne and the deeds of the traitor who usurps the seat of the chieftain. Bertha being persuaded of Dermond's death, constantly endeavours to forget him, and there is every prospect of Clement making a formidable rival. Some time ago Cormac Doil, perceiving the success of Clement, wished him to carry the maid to Dunkerlyne under pretence of assisting her to escape to her father's castle. Clement sternly refused. Cormac consequently soon succeeded in getting him confined for some trivial offence, and by every species of torture he tried to mould him to his wicked plans. Everything would have been in vain, for Clement truly loves the maid, but when threats of torturing his father were freely used, he could withstand no longer."

Here the chieftain buried his head in his hands and groaned, while Jarloff continued—

"This then is the night—or rather the morning—when the ransom should be paid, and the fair and innocent Bertha handed over to gratify the passion of he who wrongly rules in the hall of Dunkerlyne, but I shall not fail, and they shall be baffled in their unholy design."

Cyril had scarcely time to say "Amen" when Jarloff exclaimed, "But haste ye, for methinks I hear the signal from the shore intimating the approach of the boat."

Removing a solid-like bench from a corner of the chamber, Jarloff discovered, to the astonished Cyril, a trap-door showing a dark descent of steps. Descending for a little he gave a low whistle, and in a few minutes the signal was answered by the appearance of a mysterious-looking attendant carrying a flambeau.

"Conduct this venerable chieftain as I commanded you," said the minstrel. "See you be wary. Remember to shade the light passing the cross corridors, and await the opening of the secret door in the lower dungeon near the cage descent."

The attendant bowed, and signed to Cyril to follow, while Jarloff, securing the trap-door on the outside, was heard to replace the bench, and keeping close to the torch-bearer, the chieftain followed with trembling steps and a beating heart.

(To be Continued.)

THE RAID OF KILLICHRIST.

THE following correspondence appeared in recent issues of the *Courier* and of the *Highlander*. Dr Buchan's version having first appeared in these pages, it may interest our readers:—

SIR,—The story of the raid of Killichrist having acquired considerable prominence during the recent contest in our county, perhaps you will permit me to make a few remarks on the current versions of the tale. I shall particularly refer to the fight which took place in Glen-Urquhart between the Mackenzies and the Macdonells, and to Allan Macranald of Lundy's famous leap.

According to the late Sir Thomas Dick Lauder the Mackenzies came up to the Macdonells, who had that Sunday morning burnt the church of Killichrist and its congregation, as the latter were resting "like a tired herd of chased deer in the hills near the burn of Altsay (Aultsigh)," and there "a very sanguine skirmish" took place. Mr Alexander Mackenzie tells us in his *Historical Tales*, and also in his *History of the Clan Mackenzie*, that "the Mackenzies, under Coul, after a few hours hard running, came up with the Macdonells as they sought a brief repose on the hills towards the burn of Aultsigh," and that the Macdonells having there "maintained an equal conflict," "they turned and again fled precipitately to the burn." It was at the close of this fight that Allan of Lundy effected his escape by taking a "desperate leap" across a ravine, and that the foremost of the pursuing Mackenzies lost his life in attempting to

perform the same feat. This ravine, according to the writers I have mentioned and our guide-books, is on the burn of Aultsigh; and it is described by Sir Thomas Lauder as a "fearful ravine" and a "yawning chasm," while Mr Mackenzie applies the same expressions to it and adds "tremendous abyss."

To any person who knows the district in which these scenes are said to have occurred, it must be evident that neither of the writers whom I have named ever saw the places which they profess to describe. To begin with the leap, there is no such ravine, or chasm, or abyss on Aultsigh as they mention; and, although the burn flows through a deep glen or pass, there is no part of it over which a boy could not leap. Aultsigh, which separates Glen-Urquhart from Glenmoriston, formed the western march of the old sheep farm of Ruskich (which for years was tenanted by my grandfather), and several miles to the east of it is the burn of *Allt Giubhais*, forming the eastern boundary of the farm. In cutting its way through the high and precipitous rock of *Craig Giubhais*, this latter stream has formed a ravine which exactly answers the descriptions I have quoted. This is the chasm which Allan of Lundy cleared, and to this day it is known as *Leum a' Cheannaiche*, "the merchant's leap," from the circumstance that Allan, to acquaint himself with the country of the Mackenzies, travelled there before the raid as a "pack-merchant," and not as a mendicant as stated by Mr Mackenzie. That packmen were not unknown in those times we learn from our criminal records, which show that in 1602 (the year before the raid of Killiechrist) one of them, named Donald Macfindlay Vic Norosiche, a native of Kintail, was seized in Glenmoriston by the laird of that glen and hanged.

Now, as to the scene of the battle. At the south-eastern base of Mealfuarvonie and in the vicinity of the Merchant's Leap there is an extensive mossy plain, which for ages has supplied the people of Wester Bunloit with peat. It is well known as *Lon na Fola*, "the Moss of Blood," and there the sanguinary conflict took place, and not "near" or "towards" Aultsigh.

Another point before I close. In Mr Mackenzie's version *Alexander Mackenzie of Coul* is mentioned as the person who perished in the attempt to follow Macranald, and in a footnote it is explained that it is historically incorrect to say that he so perished, as he lived to die a very old man in 1650. On the other hand, Sir Thomas Dick Lauder gives the unfortunate man's name as *Hector Mackenzie of Beaully*; while the local tradition simply tells that a *Mackenzie* met his death as described, without condescending on the particulars given by our writers. Seanachies, like bards, are, rightly or wrongly, allowed a certain license. Whether it is owing to the exercise of that privilege that the names of Mackenzie of Beaully and Mackenzie of Coul have been introduced into the tale I cannot tell, but as a Glen-Urquhart man, who takes some interest in the history and traditions of the Glen, I should like to know when and in what manner these names first came to be associated with the Merchant's Leap. Perhaps the latest seanachie of the tale can throw light on this question.

It is right to mention that a Mr Grassie, who at one time resided in Glen-Urquhart, wrote a book many years ago, in which he gave the legend of Killiechrist, and pointed out the true localities of the fight and the leap.—Your obedient servant,

Inverness, May 1880,

WILLIAM MACKAY.

SIR,—Mr William Mackay, in his interesting communication in to-day's *Courier* on the hitherto considered infamous, but now really famous, raid of Cillechrist, gives me an opportunity of supplying some little additional information regarding it, which may, perhaps, prove interesting to him and to others of your readers. First, however, let me tell him that the version of the story which appears in my "History of the Mackenzies," and in the "Historical Tales and Legends of the Highlands," is not my version. It is no secret that it, as well as several others in the latter volume was written by Dr Buchan, late of the Lancashire Insurance Office here, though he was too modest to allow his name to appear in connection with them. Mr Jolly, however, let the cat out of the bag at a meeting of the Field Club, on the occasion of the reading of a paper before the Club by Dr Buchan shortly before he left Inverness. I possess Sir Thomas Dick Lauder's and Grassie's versions of the story. The first is good, but long and prosy. The latter, published in 1843, is wretchedly written, but his description of Glen-Urquhart scenery may possibly be perfect, though his descriptions of the other districts mentioned in the story, as given by him, are simply absurd. For instance, he tells us that the Chief of Glengarry held a property in the seventeenth century "in the neighbourhood of Lochbroom called Groam Garranach, in the centre of the lands belonging to the Clan McKenzie, who were extremely adverse to his neighbour's nearness."

This "Groam Garranach" is Grassie's, equivalent from "Stròm Carrannach," or Strome of Lochcarron, which he ridiculously places "in the neighbourhood of Lochbroom." Another writer, possessing an accurate knowledge of the district, has written a version of the same story, in which he says that the leap was by Alexander of Coul at Aultsigh. This was Andrew Fraser, commonly called "Goggan," whose manuscript contains this and many others of local interest, and is in the possession of Mr Noble, bookseller, Castle Street. Of all these, I prefer Dr Buchan's version, and hence, when compiling "The Historical Tales and Legends of the Highlands," I have chosen it. There are various other traditions as to the Mackenzie supposed to have made the terrible leap. According to some he was Mackenzie of Redcastle.

Rory Mor, first of Redcastle, has a charter under the Great Seal, in 1608, five years after the burning of Cillechrist, and his son, Murdoch, who was really one of the leaders of the Mackenzies on the occasion, has a sasine as heir to his father in 1615. Others have it that the hero was a Mackenzie of Ord. John Mackenzie, first of Ord "visited" the burning of the church, but he lived until 1644. There is no record in any Mackenzie document or manuscript of a *Hector Mackenzie of Beaully*, and if such a person had taken the prominent part ascribed to him at Aultsigh and at Kyleakin by Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, the MSS. which give such a full account, especially of the latter engagement, would certainly have recorded his exploits.

I am fortunate in having temporary possession of some of these MSS. One of them is an original, and was written very soon after the burning of the church; for the writer of it says that his information regarding the events which immediately preceded this atrocious act was obtained from those who had taken a share in them. It also presents other internal evidence which goes to prove that it was written not later than 1650. I

think, therefore, this contemporary MS. may be fairly considered superior to the venerable "Catechist of Bunloit" of forty years ago, whom Grassie gives as his authority, and even to Mr William Mackay's local knowledge, though his grandfather did occupy a neighbouring farm. One of the MSS., from which I quote, is the property of Mr James F. Mackenzie of Allangrange, and is the oldest that I know of in existence. It proceeds—

"Shortly after this (that is after the taking of the Castle of Strome) Allan McRannald of Lundy made one onsett to the Braes of Ross, and brunt the Lands of Gillichrist and other adjacent towns, qupon my Lord Kintaile sends two parties in pursuit of him—one commanded by Murdo Mackenzy of Redcastle, the other by Alexander McKenzy of Coull. Redcastle went the way of Inverness to Stratharrick, and accidentally in a town called Torrybreck he gets intelligence that Angus McRory and 36 of his followers were drinking in ane Change-house nearby. A man of Redcastle's being well acquaintt (called Donald McKennich piper) led them secretly to the house, setts it on fire, and every man as came out they killed. Rannald himself coming at last to the door, he sought quarters, which Redcastle would have granted him, but one Donald McCurchie said, you shall have such quarters as you gave to Donald McConochy Chyle. (This Donald was a very pretty fellow of the Clan can oyr who was killed by this Rannald after he had given him quarters when young Glengarry harried Lochcarron.) So when he understood there was no mercy for him, he ran out. The oyr gave such a race after him—came so near him—that he could not shoot him. Struks him with the bow on the head, which he brake, throws him flatt to the ground. But or he could recover himself he sticked him with his dirk (so we may see one ill turn meets another). Of all his company none escaped except ane subtile fellow (which I cannot forgett) who came out at the roof of the house, began to tear it and crying for watter and said wt a loud voice, Mackenzie, tho' you have a quarrell agst the Clan Rannald, I hope you have none agst my Mr and me when you burn my house after this manner. With this he went free as if he had been land-lord indeed, and Redcastle turns homewards with his company."

"The oyr partie that went with Alexr. M'Kenzy of Coull went the way of Beaulie to Urquhart and to Glen Morriston, and foretakes Allan M'Rannald resting themselves on a sheill in little huts near a rough burn called Ald Sayh. Giveing the alarme, some of them with Allan fought manfully, oys fled, which all alive of them were forced in end to doe. But as their misfortune was they missed the foord. The Burn was so rough running 'twixt two craiggs that severalls broke their bones there. Shunning their killing they met death in their way. But Rannald being half naked, as he fled, lopps just over it, and made his escape of all the rest. The pursuers seeing him loupe and on the oyr side notwithstanding thereof could not be persuaded he did it, and no man ever saw that place yet that would believe it, which being seall times asked of himself afterwards, he said he knew sensibly he loupd that very place, but how he came over that he knew not, except it was with the wings of fear and Providence. But give him all the world he would not try it again."

I have also before me a copy of the Letterfearn MS. by the favour of Captain MacRa Chisholm, Glassburn. This MS. must have been written nearly as early in the seventeenth century as the one already quoted, for

the writer of it informs us that he went to the battlefield of Auldearn, fought in 1645, along with one of the officers who took part in the engagement. After describing the burning of Cillechriost he says—"The country being alarmed and gathering, they (the Macdonnells) were forced to return, for Murdo MacKenzie of Redcastle and Alexander MacKenzie of Coul were sent with some forces to pursue them." He then describes the affair at Torbreck, and continues—"And Coul having pursued Allan and his men through Urquhart and Glenmoriston, came unaware upon them while they were resting and reposing themselves in a shielling near a rough burn called Aultsaugh, where some of them stood and fought a while, in the end were forced to fly, and by reason of the rocks and deepness of the burn many of them broke their bones and were drowned in the burn, preferring that to the pursuers' swords. Allan himself beyond all expectation, and to the surprise not only of himself afterwards, but of all that knew the place, did leap over the burn cleverly and made his escape. After this their bad success everywhere, they attempted to trouble Mackenzie no more, nore his people, but give it totally over, thus these unhappy and bloody troubles ended."

Personally, I have no theory in connection with this affair. But my friend, Mr Mackay, will excuse me if I prefer plain, unadorned contemporary history like the above to the dogmatic *is* of even such a "seannachaidh" as himself, and the authority of the Lowland exciseman, Grassie, who wrote his version in 1843, about two hundred years later than the above-quoted authorities. In any case I am glad to be in a position to inform Mr Mackay, so far, "when and in what manner" the name of Alexander Mackenzie of Coul first came to be associated with this extraordinary leap. Coul was the fleetest warrior in the North in his day, and was one of the most distinguished leaders of the Clan Mackenzie in those terrible times. Whether the leap was over Aultsigh or Ault-Giubhais, it seems perfectly clear that *no* Mackenzie followed Allan of Lundy across the ravine; that, consequently, he could not have been killed in the manner described, and that it is more probable, as I suggested elsewhere, that the addition was introduced by those "licensed" seannachies of modern times to adorn the tale.—Yours faithfully,

"Celtic Magazine" Office, Inverness, May 13, 1880.

A. MACKENZIE.

Literature.

POEMS AND SONGS, IN GAELIC AND ENGLISH. By Mrs MARY MACKELLAR,
Bard of the Gaelic Society of Inverness. Edinburgh: Maclachlan & Stewart.

It gives us great pleasure to notice the poetical works of Mrs Mackellar in the form of a pretty volume of 140 pages. As most of our readers know, Mrs Mackellar is no mere rhymist—she is a true poet, and we venture to predict that not only will the present volume add much to her poetical reputation, but that it will also show the highly respectable position she occupies among Victorian poets. With the exception of the bard MacColl, and her own countryman, Ewen Maclachlan, she is perhaps the only Gaelic bard who has made a mark in the composition of English

poetry. She tunes her lyre with equal ease in dulcet strains to captivate either the Saxon or the Gael, and some of her English verse will bear favourable comparison with those of most of our modern English lyric poets. And while she thus maintains a good position among English song-writers, she will be found to stand in the front rank of the Gaelic bards, not merely of the present, but of the past.

Mary Mackellar (néé Cameron) was born and brought up in Lochaber, where she acquired full knowledge of the local Gaelic with all its richness, drinking at the same time poetical inspiration at the foot of Ben-Nevis as if it were Helicon. In course of time she married, and with her husband, Captain Mackellar, visited the principal ports in Northern Europe. She thus had an opportunity of seeing life under various phases—from the quiet, unsophisticated village life in Lochaber to all the activity of the great towns. She became fully conversant with the world as it is, and in her poems we have depicted life and scenes as seen by herself.

In early years the muse manifested herself to Mrs Mackellar, and some of the pieces in this volume were composed many years ago. But the great bulk of those now published were composed when she roved about as a sailor—roving, by the way, of which she some time ago gave interesting accounts in the columns of the weekly edition of the *Free Press*. When in Hanover in 1866 she composed one of the best lyrics in the Gaelic language. The water there she found far from palatable, and it compared most unfavourably with the crystal springs that gushed out from the foot of Ben Nevis. The contrast roused within her strong feelings for the old land, and she sang the praises of her native Highlands in flowing verse, finding consolation in the fact that her own Lochy she would soon see :—

'S n uair ruigeas mi tìr an àigh,
Tìr mo dhàimh 'us luchd mo ghràidh,
Nàile, theid mi fhìn gun dàil
A dh'ol mo shàth á Lòchaidh.

A sprig of Highland heather which she received in a distant land awakened thoughts of her dear native mountains, misty glens, winding rivers, and sylvan glades, and these thoughts she embodies in excellent verse—

Thou hast come with the smell of my dear native land,
And tales of the freshness of moorland and lea ;
From the wild misty glens, where in glory thou bloomest,
A whisper of love thou has brought unto me.
O dear to my heart are thy sweet purple blossoms,
That grow 'mong the brackens that curl on the braes,
And by the green banks of the clear winding rivers,
Whose murmurs I hear, as upon thee I gaze.

We could multiply quotations, but it is unnecessary, for several of Mrs Mackellar's best poetical compositions in recent years have appeared in our own columns, such, for instance, as her spirited song to Captain Chisholm, Glassburn, and her pathetic elegy on the younger Norman Macleod—the former in the tongue of the Gael, the latter in that of the Saxon. Being thus so well known to our readers, it is sufficient to say that we heartily welcome the publication of her poetical works in their present form, and we sincerely hope that the poet may long be spared to sing in flowing verse the praises of her native Highlands.